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THE ESCHATOLOGICAL QUESTION IN THE GOSPELS

AND OTHER STUDIES IN RECENT NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL QUESTION IN THE GOSPELS

And other Studies in Recent New Testament Criticism

BY THE REV.

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VICAR OF WEST HENDRED

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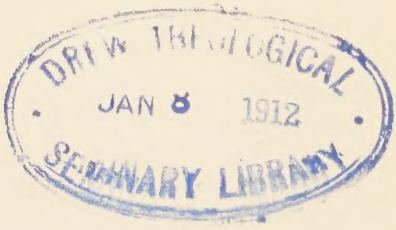

PREFACE

THE subjects of these essays, though they all deal with recent New Testament criticism, are a little miscellaneous. But the first four, which comprise the bulk of the book, have in common one feature which may perhaps be of value to the busy reader. In discussing the views of Schweitzer, Loisy, and Harnack, the attempt has been made to give verbatim extracts from their works to an extent sufficient to enable him to judge for himself the merits of their respective positions, apart from any gloss put on them by the critic.

A few words of explanation may be useful as to the general standpoint adopted in this book. New Testament critics would seem to be divided just at present into the two camps of which Father Tyrrell has spoken in *Christianity at the Cross-Roads.* On the one hand there is the familiar Liberal and

Protestant criticism, of which Bousset and Harnack are generally taken as examples; on the other there is the newer and more radical type, represented by Loisy and Schweitzer, and endorsed by Tyrrell. The paradox is that this latter has found not a few of its exponents and supporters in the ranks of those who hold more closely to the Creeds and the fuller faith of historic Christianity, than does the older Liberal school.

If a more or less personal note may for a moment be allowed, I myself in each case approached the writers of this second school with every possible prejudice in their favour, and with the hope that I should find at length that reconciliation of faith and criticism for which so many are looking. Perhaps the somewhat unreasonable nature of this hope may, by the law of reaction, be responsible for the ultimate impression made upon me. However that may be, the feeling of dissatisfaction deepened at each reading. I found myself continually contrasting the impressions made on me by the Harnack-Bousset school, to which at an earlier period I had come fresh from the sincere milk of a less critical teaching. There, there had been

but little to repel. Rather, I was amazed at the tone of reverence pervading a literature which was supposed to be "dangerous." It might present what Dr. Sanday has lately called "a reduced Christianity," but it was Christianity, and it seemed to offer a foundation on which a fuller Christianity might safely be built.

On the other hand, it became impossible to resist the conviction that the newer school, though as a whole it cared more for the superstructure than did its predecessors, was yet in fact busily engaged in removing every stone of the foundation on which alone that superstructure can rest. In particular, the figure of the historic Jesus receives a treatment which either practically banishes Him from the stage of history, leaving Him as a Great Unknown of whose life and teaching we can affirm almost nothing, or else strips Him of nearly every attribute which has hitherto attracted the love and admiration of the world. That when this is done, the Christ, who somehow springs from His ashes, can retain the worship of the world, it is difficult to believe.

Such, at any rate, is the position reached in the following pages; and I hope that the touch of autobiography will have made it

clear that, whether it be right or wrong, its adoption is at least not due to any *a priori* prejudice. The conclusion was not ready formed before the books in question were opened, but was forced upon me as a result of their study, against my will and expectation. If something is done to remove the widespread impression that the position of Loisy and Schweitzer is somehow more compatible with a full and Catholic Christianity than is that of the "Liberal Protestants," this little volume may perhaps justify its existence.

It remains to offer my grateful acknowledgments for permission to reprint articles, granted by the editors and publishers of the *Expository Times* (Essays II. and IV.), the *Contemporary Review* (Essay III.), the *Expositor* (Essays (V. and VI.), and the *Interpreter* (Essay VII.). A reference has been added here and there to subsequent literature, but the papers remain substantially unaltered.

CYRIL W. EMMET.

West Hendred Vicarage,
September 17, 1910.

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I

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL QUESTION IN THE GOSPELS AS INTERPRETED BY SCHWEITZER

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE *eschatological question* is, without doubt, the most live issue in New Testament criticism at the present day. Eschatology means properly the doctrine of the last things, and in its proper sense the word is, of course, not confined to any one conception of them. A Dictionary article on Eschatology would deal with the various views current in different circles and at different times with regard to the future of the world, the nature of life after death, Heaven and Hell, and kindred subjects. But in the set of questions we are about to discuss, the eschatological theory, and similar phrases, refer to one particular doctrine of the last things. The eschatologist, as the word is used in critical discussions just at present, is one who holds that most of the New Testament writers, and our Lord Himself, believed that the end of the world was to come in the lifetime of those

then living, and that this belief is the best key to the understanding of the Synoptic Gospels. The position derives its strength from the light thrown on the New Testament by the study of the apocalyptic literature of contemporary Judaism.[1] This literature shows to what an extent the hopes of the Jews, or at least certain sections among them, were directed to the future. They looked for God to redress the evils and oppression under which they suffered by a startling supernatural catastrophe, which was to annihilate the existing order, and bring in a new heaven and earth ; in each Apocalypse the writer is convinced that God will do this right early. It is held, then, that a similar apocalyptic hope was the central motive in the career and preaching of Jesus.

This view is specially connected with the name of Albert Schweitzer, a *Privatdozent* at Strassburg, who, of course, built to some extent on the work of his predecessors, particularly Johannes Weiss. It was first brought before the general English reader by Dr. Sanday ; though far from accepting Schweitzer's theory as it stands, he devoted a large part of his *Life of Christ in Recent Research* to a sympathetic discussion of the latter's *Von Reimarus zu*

[1] Some account of this literature will be found below in the concluding essay, "The Problem of the Apocalypse."

Wrede, in which the eschatological position is developed.[1]

On the other hand, Father Tyrrell in his *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, published after his death, appears as a whole-hearted supporter. He accepts the view of Weiss and Schweitzer, practically without reserve, as the last word of criticism. Chapter viii., "The Christ of Eschatology," is a summary of it, given after his manner with no quotations or references, a method which is perhaps acceptable to the general reader, but which has its drawbacks, not only to the serious student, but to any one who wishes to know the authority on which a statement is based. The rest of the book is an

[1] References will be readily found in the index to Dr. Sanday's book. It will be well to quote what he himself has said more recently in a letter to the *Guardian* (19th August 1910): "I cannot say that I look back with satisfaction to the way in which I wrote on this subject three years ago. I made the mistake of trying to do two things at once—to give some account of Schweitzer, and at the same time to state what I thought could be assimilated of his book. In the double task I cannot think that I was successful. At the same time, I am conscious that I owe much to Schweitzer for compelling me to see things that I had not seen before or seen so clearly. I cannot retract anything of the acknowledgments that I made to him on this head. Neither can I retract anything that I said in praise of qualities which excited my genuine admiration. And yet I admit that the balance was not struck perfectly. I made allowance for the audacities of a young writer. There are one or two that I should not defend. Which of us sends out a book in which he has nothing to regret?"

attempt to draw out the implications of the theory, and to prove its compatibility with a liberal Catholicism. Other indications of the interest which the question raises may be seen in the place which it filled in the International Congress for the History of Religions, and the Summer School of Theology, held at Oxford in the early autumn of 1908 and 1909 respectively. The record of the former is to be found in the two papers printed in the second volume of the *Proceedings*, "New Testament Eschatology and New Testament Ethics," by Professor Peabody, and "Early Christian Eschatology," by Professor von Dobschütz.[1] That of the latter is to be found in the series of papers on "The Eschatology of the Gospels," also by Professor von Dobschütz, in the *Expositor* of January to May 1910.[2] Reference should also be made to Dr. Burkitt's essay in the *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, a paper written with a peculiar charm of style, and dealing sympathetically with the presuppositions and implications of the theory, rather than with its details. On the other side, Dr. Inge, in a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge and in reviews,

[1] The discussion which followed was conducted by Drs. Sanday, P. Gardner, Burkitt, Professor Lake, and Mr. Montefiore, a combination of experts, which is significant of the importance of the subject.

[2] Now published in book form.

has come forward as an uncompromising opponent.[1]

Generally speaking, every recent book which touches on New Testament criticism has some reference or other to the point at issue. For the theory is so far-reaching that, if accepted, it modifies, and modifies profoundly, the results of New Testament study on nearly every side.

Fortunately the English reader can now go to the fountainhead. Early in the present year (1910) an English translation of *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* appeared under the title of *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, accompanied by a Preface by Dr. Burkitt.[2] The object of this essay will be in the first place to explain as clearly as possible the nature and the basis of the eschatological theory, and then to offer some criticisms upon its validity. We shall confine ourselves in the main to Schweitzer himself, and our references throughout will be to the translation. His book is written to commend the eschatological solution of the problems raised by the life of Christ. It is true

[1] *Guardian*, 13th May 1910; *Hibbert Journal*, January 1910; *Journal of Theological Studies*, July 1910. There has also been a discussion at the Cambridge Church Congress, in which Dr. Charles (amongst others) criticised Schweitzer very severely. And no one can suggest that he is likely to minimise the importance of Apocalyptic.

[2] London: A. & C. Black.

that only the concluding chapters deal with this directly, the greater portion of the book being occupied with a detailed sketch of the course of German[1] criticism as applied to the Gospels and the life of Jesus "from Reimarus to Wrede," *i.e.* roughly from 1774, when Lessing began to publish posthumous fragments of the writings of Reimarus, to 1901, the date of Wrede's *Messianic Secret in the Gospels.* But this preliminary survey is strictly germane to the main subject, for the writer's object is to show how various assured results have been gradually reached by New Testament criticism, and how imperfect solutions of the problems have been one by one eliminated. This elimination leaves the field clear for the thoroughgoing eschatological solution, glimpses of which have been caught by earlier critics from Reimarus onwards.

Whatever view we ultimately find ourselves compelled to take of Schweitzer's position, there can be no doubt that the book is of supreme value, both on account of the uncompromising and thought-provoking manner in which the questions are stated, and also for the unique synopsis which it gives of the history and growth of critical opinion. The book is not always easy to read, and the language is at

[1] There are some references to writers of other nationalities, and a chapter is devoted to Renan.

times enigmatic, but as a rule there is no mistaking the writer's meaning, and he delights the reader with a series of vivid and illuminating metaphors, which it would be hard to parallel in literature of this type.

It is perhaps needless to praise *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*. We may not be able to endorse Tyrrell's attitude towards the Gospel story, but the whole book will be found to be full of suggestions and points of view of the profoundest interest; the discussions of symbolism, and of the place of religion in relation to morality and social progress, stand out as specially important. But it would complicate the inquiry before us too much if we were to attempt to deal with these aspects of the book.

CHAPTER II.

SCHWEITZER'S POSITION.

The pith of Schweitzer's positive results is found in his last two chapters. He sketches with a sufficiently decisive, not to say brutal, touch the difficulties which he considers insoluble on any of the usual theories of the life of Christ, whether liberal or orthodox. His charge is that they all read too much into the text of Mark, and the Synoptists in general, adding "connecting links" for which there is no justification, and regarding as self-evident the very things which require the most stringent proof. "Mark knows nothing of any development in Jesus; he knows nothing of any pedagogic considerations which are supposed to have determined the conduct of Jesus towards the disciples and the people; he knows nothing of any conflict in the mind of Jesus between a spiritual and a popular political Messianic ideal; he does not know either that in this respect there was any difference between the view of Jesus and that of the people; he

knows nothing of the idea that the use of the ass at the triumphal entry symbolised a non-political Messiahship; he knows nothing of the idea that the question about the Messiah's being the Son of David had something to do with this alternative between political and non-political; he does not know either that Jesus explained the secret of the Passion to the disciples, nor that they had any understanding of it; he only knows that from first to last they were in all respects equally wanting in understanding; he does not know that the first period was a period of success, and the second a period of failure; he represents the Pharisees and Herodians as (from 3^6 onwards) resolved upon the death of Jesus, while the people, down to the very last day when He preached in the temple, are enthusiastically loyal to Him."[1] And, referring to the claim of critical scepticism that all connecting links should be justified, he says in a characteristic and delightful metaphor: "Formerly it was possible to book through-tickets at the supplementary-psychological-knowledge office which enabled those travelling in the interests of Life-of-Jesus construction to use express trains, thus avoiding the inconvenience of having to stop at every little station, change, and run the risk of missing their

[1] P. 330.

connection. This ticket office is now closed. There is a station at the end of each section of the narrative, and the connections are not guaranteed."[1]

He finds that Wrede and himself have stated the real problems in much the same way, and if we are to do anything like justice to his own solution, we must have a clear idea of what they are. Most of them are connected with the Messiahship. Demoniacs address Jesus as Son of God; a blind man as Son of David; He makes what is supposed to be a Messianic entry. Yet His Messiahship is a secret only revealed to the disciples at Cæsarea Philippi (how?); it is to be unknown till after the Resurrection, and is covered by the mysterious title Son of Man; the high priest only learns it in answer to his direct question. What is "the mystery" connected with the teaching by parables? The place of miracles in the mind of Jesus? Why should He anticipate persecutions for His followers, and death for Himself? Did He go to Jerusalem in order to die or to work? How reconcile Gethsemane with His prophecies of death? What is the meaning of the sayings in Mt 10^{23} and elsewhere about the imminent coming of the Son of Man? And so on almost without limit. Schweitzer has

[1] P. 332.

three full pages of these *ἀπόρια*, some of them a little trivial, some of them real difficulties on any view of the Gospels and the life of Christ.

Wrede's solution of these problems is a sufficiently desperate one. It is that Jesus was only thought of as Messiah *after* the Resurrection; the contradictions have arisen from the more or less conscious attempts of tradition, and the Evangelists, to explain how it came about that He was not recognised as Messiah before, the impression of the non-Messianic character of His life being still too strong to allow of the story being recast altogether. Schweitzer's detailed criticism of Wrede need not detain us; we pass on to his own view, which is that of "thoroughgoing eschatology."

It is stated on pp. 350 ff., and no excuse need be offered for a somewhat full summary. As has already been said, a similar summary will be found in Tyrrell's *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, chap. viii., "The Christ of Eschatology."

Jesus, having come in contact with the movement initiated by the Baptist, appeared Himself in Galilee proclaiming the near approach of the kingdom of God. From first to last His public life and teaching were dominated by this one idea, that the existing world-age was to come to an abrupt end, and the "kingdom"

to be established suddenly, miraculously, and supernaturally, not, be it understood, in any sense as a new force in the old world, but as something which was to take its place. Accordingly, He Himself was a herald or prophet, rather than a teacher. His disciples "are not His helpers in the work of teaching; we never see them in that capacity, and He did not prepare them to carry on that work after His death. . . . He chooses them as those who are destined to hurl the firebrand into the world, and are afterwards, as those who have been the companions of the existing Messiah, before He came to His kingdom, to be His associates in ruling and judging it."[1] It is true that, according to the counsel of God, penitence was a condition of the coming of the kingdom;[2] no one could hope for a place therein who was not qualified by repentance. This repentance is supplemented by a special system of ethics, found in the Sermon on the Mount; it is an *Interimsethik* suited to the brief interval before the coming of the kingdom, the code of a dying world, not of a world which is to endure from generation to generation.

Bound up with this ethic is a strict predestin-

[1] P. 369.

[2] The obscure saying in Mt 11^{12} refers to "the host of penitents which is wringing the kingdom from God," p. 355.

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arianism. In the parables and kindred sayings "there lies concealed a supernatural knowledge concerning the plans of God, which only those who have ears to hear—that is, the foreordained—can detect. For others these sayings are unintelligible."[1] "All that goes beyond that simple phrase [*sc.* 'repent ye,' etc.] must be publicly presented only in parables, in order that those only who are shown to possess predestination, by having the initial knowledge which enables them to understand the parables, may receive a more advanced knowledge."[2] In the parable of the Marriage Supper (Mt 22^{1-14}) the man who has not on the wedding garment is ejected solely because he is not predestined. The Beatitudes "are really predestinarian in form." They are not intended by Jesus "as an injunction or exhortation, but as a simple statement of fact; in their being poor in spirit, in their meekness, in their love of peace, it is made manifest that they are predestined to the kingdom."[3] Again, it is "the predestinarianism which is an integral part of eschatology, and which, in fact, dominated the thought of Jesus," which explains why He spoke of giving His life as a ransom for *many*, not for the nation, or for all. "The Lord is conscious that He dies only for the elect. For

[1] P. 356. [2] P. 352. [3] P. 353.

others His death can avail nothing, nor even their own repentance."[1] Or it explains His reply to the sons of Zebedee that the places on His right hand and left are to be given only to those for whom they are prepared; "therefore perhaps not to any of the disciples. At this point, therefore, the knowledge and will of Jesus are thwarted and limited by the predestinarianism which is bound up with eschatology."[2] On the other hand, it is sometimes a cause of hope. He follows up the refusal of the rich young man with the suggestion that "with God all things are possible." "That is, He will not give up the hope that the young man, in spite of appearances which are against him, will be found to have belonged to the kingdom of God, solely in virtue of the secret, all-powerful will of God. Of a 'conversion' of the young man there is no question."[3]

"The mystery of the kingdom" enshrined in the parables is the nearness and the miraculous nature of its coming. In parables such as those in Mk 4, "it is not the idea of development but of apparent absence of causation which occupies the foremost place. The description aims at suggesting how, and by what power, incomparably great and glorious results can be infallibly produced by an insignificant fact with-

[1] P. 388, n. 1. [2] P. 363. [3] P. 353.

out human aid."[1] The frequent references to sowing and reaping are to be accounted for by the fact that Jesus believed that the harvest then ripening on earth was in very truth the last. The movement had probably begun in the spring, and all was to come to an end in the harvest of the summer, which corresponded to the harvest ripening in heaven. The saying about the rich harvest in Mt $9^{37.38}$ probably refers to the close temporal connection of the earthly and heavenly harvests.

This belief finds its climax in the mission of the Twelve, which follows the rejection at Nazareth, where Jesus had found to His surprise only a few "elect." Before the return of the Apostles He expected the *Parousia*: "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come" (Mt 10^{23})—a very crucial text in Schweitzer's mind. It is to be interpreted absolutely literally; the end was to come before they had completed their tour. It is this fact which explains the prediction of sufferings in Mt 10. They have no sort of reference to any persecutions which Christ's followers were to undergo in a more or less distant future there being no reason why Jesus should anticipate anything of the sort. They refer to the

[1] P. 354.

eschatological woes which were to precede the inauguration of the new era. During the very journey on which they were starting, the disciples were to pass through a storm of hatred and persecution, a period of bitter dissension in which brother should rise against brother, children against fathers, fathers against children. But they are encouraged "to endure till the end," *i.e.* hold out bravely for the few remaining weeks or days of the world's history. For before they could return, the Son of Man would have come.

Somehow there had been a miscalculation; the disciples came back safe and sound, and the wheel of the world rolled smoothly on its course. This point marks a crisis in the life and thought of Jesus. It explains the sudden dropping of the successful work in Galilee, and the retirement to the north, facts which Schweitzer considers altogether inexplicable on any other view. This retirement is, in fact, "a flight," as has been generally believed; not, however, from the scribes or Herod, "but from the people, who dog His footsteps in order to await in His company the appearing of the kingdom of God and of the Son of Man—to await it in vain."[1] A fresh feature now becomes

[1] P. 362.

prominent in the story. We hear henceforward, not of sufferings which are to be the fate of the elect in general, but of Jesus' own death. In the eschatological scheme a time of tribulation was expected before the end, "the birth-pangs of the Messiah." This is the trial or temptation (πειρασμός) of which we read so often; the Lord's Prayer closes with a petition to be delivered from it. But in Jewish thought the Messiah Himself had no share in this tribulation. He was a heavenly Being, who was to be manifested when the kingdom came. With this heavenly Being Jesus had identified Himself. But, probably under the influence of the Isaianic prophecies concerning the Suffering Servant, He had come to realise that He, the future Messiah, must also pass through the tribulation. Nay, more than this; He is to bear the brunt of it alone. "The pre-Messianic tribulation is for others set aside, abolished, concentrated upon Himself alone. . . . He must suffer for others that the kingdom might come."[1] In this sense His life was to be a ransom for many; henceforth His career is, in Tyrrell's phrase, "a quest of death."

This may be a suitable place to explain the position which (according to Schweitzer)

[1] P. 386.

Jesus considered Himself to hold in the scheme of things. Our understanding of it chiefly depends on the correct interpretation of the phrase "Son of Man." We cannot here enter on the long and important controversies which have centred round it. Schweitzer's own view[1] is that it was derived from Daniel, and had come to be used in a transcendental sense of the Messiah who was to come on the clouds of heaven; it is so used in the Similitudes of Enoch and 4 Esdras. Jesus would understand it as referring to a heavenly Being to be revealed in the future. Hence in the Gospels He sometimes of set purpose uses it quite vaguely. To His hearers it meant the great *Unknown*; to His own mind, but to His own alone, it meant Himself as He should shortly be manifested. The saying in Mt 10^{23}, and the parable of the Sheep and Goats (Mt 25^{31-46}), are examples of this use. In other cases, after His secret had become known, the phrase was understood as referring to Himself, as in the conversation at Cæsarea Philippi, and the reply to the high priest at the trial. "Jesus did not therefore veil His Messiahship by using the expression Son of Man, much less did He transform it, but He used the expression to refer, in the only possible way, to His

[1] Pp. 266–289.

Messianic office as destined to be realised at His 'coming,' and did so in such a manner that only the initiated understood that He was speaking of His own coming, while others understood Him as referring to the coming of a Son of Man who was other than Himself."[1]

Schweitzer is therefore compelled to maintain that the disciples never understood the expression as referring to Jesus Himself until the incident at Cæsarea Philippi, the Jews as a whole not until the trial. Apparent exceptions are to be explained in two ways. (*a*) There are cases where "Son of Man" in the Aramaic original meant simply "man";[2] *e.g.* in the sayings about the power to forgive sins, and about the Sabbath (Mk 2^{10} and 2^{28}). (*b*) In other cases tradition, following the analogy of the authentic uses of the title, substituted "Son of Man" for an original "I." A comparison of Mt 16^{13} and Mk 8^{27} proves that this did in fact sometimes occur. Mt 8^{20} ("hath not where to lay His head") and 11^{19} ("the Son of Man came eating and drinking") are most naturally explained on these lines. It will, of course, be understood that

[1] P. 282.

[2] Lietzmann, Wellhausen, and others have, of course, maintained that the Aramaic phrase *barnâshâ* could only have meant "man."

Schweitzer admits that the Evangelists always intended the phrase to apply to our Lord openly; he is trying, as he has every right to do, to go behind the tradition to the words actually used, and the meaning they conveyed to the original audience. It is interesting to note that he considers his view of the use of the title to be a vindication of the trustworthiness of the Gospel tradition.

The upshot, then, is that Jesus regarded Himself as the *future* Messiah. He was not on earth as Messiah; He had only come to announce, and to some extent to prepare for, the kingdom. It was only, as it were, an accident that the herald of the present was also the King and Judge of the future. That this was so, was His "secret." When and by whom was it first discovered? We expect the answer "at Cæsarea Philippi," but Schweitzer holds that the Transfiguration preceded the great question. The scene on the Mount was an actual occurrence, in which, in a state of rapture common to them all, the secret is revealed to the Three. Jesus supplements it with the prediction of the Passion, and the strictest injunctions to secrecy. The conversation at Cæsarea Philippi follows. Jesus, for some reason not explained, asks His disciples the

well-known question. Peter's answer is not the result of a gradually growing conviction; it is simply the acceptance of what had been revealed on the Mount. Hence our Lord's reply, that flesh and blood had not revealed it to him. But He is by no means pleased at the confession, since the secret is now shared by all the Twelve, with what tragic results will shortly appear. "Jesus was astonished. For Peter here disregarded the command given during the descent from the Mount of Transfiguration. He had 'betrayed' to the Twelve Jesus' consciousness of His Messiahship. One receives the impression that Jesus did not put the question to the disciples in order to reveal Himself to them as Messiah, and that by the impulsive speech of Peter, upon whose silence He had counted because of His command, and to whom He had not specially addressed the question, He was forced to take a different line of action in regard to the Twelve from what He had intended. It is probable that He had never had the intention of revealing the secret of His Messiahship to the disciples. Otherwise He would not have kept it from them at the time of their mission, when He did not expect them to return before the Parousia. Even at the Transfiguration the 'three' do not learn it from His lips, but in a state of ecstasy, an

ecstasy which He shared with them. At Cæsarea Philippi it is not He, but Peter, who reveals His Messiahship. We may say, therefore, that Jesus did not voluntarily give up His Messianic secret; it was wrung from Him by the pressure of events."[1]

The revelation once made was readily accepted. There remained, however, a preliminary objection in the mind of the disciples: Elias must first come. Is not Jesus Elias, the forerunner? No; as our Lord explains during the descent from the Mount, the Baptist has been Elias.[2] It is true that, according to Mt 11^{14}, He had already made a similar statement to the people on the occasion of the Baptist's message, but we are reminded that the disciples were not then present, and we must apparently assume that no report of what had passed reached their ears. When the Baptist asked Jesus, "Art thou he that cometh?" the question meant, "Art thou Elias?" not "Art thou the Messiah?" though the Evangelist has given the episode a Messianic colouring. The question was indeed an awkward one for Jesus to answer without revealing His secret, and His reply is intentionally obscure. But He adds to it the statement identifying the *Baptist* with Elias, and in so doing "unveiled

[1] P. 384. [2] Mt 17^{12}.

to [the people] almost the whole mystery of the kingdom of God, and nearly disclosed the secret of His Messiahship. . . . If John was Elias, who was Jesus?"[1] It is true the description of Elias did not fit John at all; "Jesus makes him Elias, simply because He expected His own manifestation as Son of Man, and before that it was necessary that Elias must first have come." In particular, "the death of Elias was not contemplated in the eschatological doctrine, and was, in fact, unthinkable. But Jesus must somehow drag or force the eschatological events into the framework of the actual occurrences."[2]

The rest of the story is concerned with the death of the Messiah. "Jesus sets out for Jerusalem solely in order to die there." If He teaches as a prophet, it is mainly because "He thinks only how He can so provoke the Pharisees and the rulers that they will be compelled to get rid of Him. That is why He violently cleanses the Temple, and attacks the Pharisees, in the presence of the people, with passionate invective."[3] The entry into Jerusalem is, as is shown by the attendant circumstances, "a Messianic act on the part of Jesus, an action in which His consciousness of His office breaks through, as it did at the

[1] P. 373. [2] P. 374. [3] P. 389.

sending forth of the disciples, in the explanation that the Baptist was Elias, and in the feeding of the multitude.[1] But others can have had no suspicion of the Messianic significance of that which was going on before their eyes. The entry into Jerusalem was therefore Messianic for Jesus, but not Messianic for the people."[2] In the eyes of the multitude He was the Prophet, Elias, as is shown by Mt 21^{11}; though here again the Evangelist has wrongly given a Messianic colouring to the whole episode. Jesus is, in fact, "playing with His secret," as He played with it once more when He asked the question about the Messiah being David's Son.

The people, however, have not guessed His secret, even at the last. The high priest by his crucial question at the trial suddenly shows himself to be in possession of it. How? Because Judas has betrayed the secret. "For a hundred and fifty years the question has been historically discussed why Judas betrayed his Master. That the main question for criticism was *what he betrayed* was suspected by few, and they only touched on it in a timid kind of way."[3] "Jesus died because two of His disciples had broken His command of silence: Peter when he made known the secret of the Messiahship

[1] See below, p. 36. [2] P. 391. [3] P. 394.

to the Twelve at Cæsarea Philippi; Judas Iscariot by communicating it to the high priest."[1] But Judas was only a single witness; it is no use calling him unless he can be supported. Jesus Himself cuts the knot by His reply to the high priest's question, strengthening His admission by an allusion to His Parousia. When the case is referred to Pilate the presence of the people creates a difficulty, since they are on Jesus' side. The priests "had done everything so quickly and quietly that they might well have hoped to get Jesus crucified before any one knew what was happening, or had had time to wonder at His non-appearance in the Temple." Suddenly the crowd is seen to be eager for His execution. The explanation is that the priests had spread the sensational report of His Messianic claim. "That makes Him at once from a prophet worthy of honour into a deluded enthusiast and blasphemer. That was the explanation of the 'fickleness' of the Jerusalem mob, which is always so eloquently described without any evidence for it except this single inexplicable case."[2]

The sketch of the career of Jesus ends, somewhat enigmatically, with the following paragraph: "At midday of the same day—

[1] P. 394. [2] P. 395.

it was the 14th Nisan, on the evening of which the Paschal lamb was eaten—Jesus cried aloud and expired. He had chosen to remain fully conscious to the last." [1]

The next chapter, headed "Results," begins: "Those who are fond of talking about negative theology can find their account here. There is nothing more negative than the result of the critical study of the life of Jesus." [2]

[1] P. 395. [2] P. 396.

CHAPTER III.

SOME PRELIMINARY CRITICISMS.

The impression which Schweitzer's theory makes on different readers varies greatly. Some find it merely grotesque from first to last; some are steadily fascinated by it; others, again, are repelled and attracted by turns. The reasons of its undoubted attraction for many minds are not far to seek. The conception seems to be consistent and thoroughgoing; it is a master-key which can fit every lock. It moves apparently within the limits of what is strictly historical, yet it leaves room for mystery. It claims to do justice to the Gospels as they stand, and to dispense with all "modernising and psychologising." Further, it is thought to vindicate the position of the Sacraments and the originality of the references to the Church. On such grounds as these it has won considerable favour, both from those who have a first-hand acquaintance with Schweitzer, as well as from some who have not. It will be

well then for us to examine some of the claims which it makes for itself.

We may take, first, its claim to do justice to the Gospels, or rather to the Synoptists. "We may, in fact, say that the progressive recognition of the eschatological character of the teaching and action of Jesus carries with it a progressive justification of the Gospel tradition."[1] In criticising his predecessors, Schweitzer protests continually that they treat the Gospels arbitrarily, accepting or rejecting just what suits their theory, reading too much into the text, and taking for granted the very things which require most proof. We expect, therefore, that his own procedure will be free from this charge, and Dr. Sanday says of him that "he keeps much closer to the texts than most critics do; he expressly tells us that his investigations have helped to bring out the historical trustworthiness of the Gospels,"[2] though he points out later on that he is not consistent in this respect.[3] Certainly he is not. We do not, of course, quarrel with him for ignoring the Fourth Gospel for his purpose, but it is a very serious matter when we find him entirely sweeping away the third. In his

[1] P. 285. [2] *Life of Christ in Recent Research*, p. 88.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 101.

reconstruction of the life of Christ he makes no use whatever of St. Luke; how gravely this omission affects the resultant picture of the teaching of Christ we shall see later on. And in the two Gospels which he does use, his procedure does not seem to differ very materially from that of his predecessors. We have seen that he goes a long way behind the text in order to arrive at what he considers the authentic use of the expression "Son of Man"; he does not hesitate to transpose the Transfiguration and the scene at Cæsarea Philippi; the prophecy of the sufferings in Mk 8^{34} cannot possibly come where it is placed by the Evangelist, and the predictions of tribulation in Mk 13 cannot be derived from Jesus, simply because as they stand they contradict Schweitzer's theory that, after the mission of the Twelve, the expectation of a general tribulation is entirely displaced by the thought of the sufferings which Jesus Himself must undergo.[1] The command to baptize is, of course, not an authentic saying of Jesus.[2] He is practically silent about the Resurrection, and, needless to say, does not accept the narratives of miracles as they stand.

Once more Schweitzer himself reads so much into the Gospels and supplies such

[1] P. 387, n. 1; see above, p. 19. [2] P. 379.

important connecting links, that he has developed a theory practically unsuspected for over eighteen centuries. He admits that it is not the view of the Evangelists themselves, who have frequently misrepresented the nature of the events they record. To get at the truth, he has to go behind their narrative.[1] One would not suggest for a moment that these considerations invalidate the eschatological theory. The Gospel narrative is fragmentary, and is not clear as it stands; it demands the insertion of explanatory links and some connecting scheme. This is done, and must be done, by the most orthodox commentator as much as by the liberal critic. And we cannot deny *a priori* that some of the Gospels, and some of the incidents they narrate, may be more historical than others, so that in order to recover the facts we may be compelled to select here and discard there. Our point is that there seems to be but scant justification for Schweitzer's implied claim that he has somehow escaped the necessity for any such procedure. He pours unlimited scorn upon the various explanations offered of the "flight to the north." On his own view it is accounted for by the disappointment of Jesus, when the Parousia did not take place

[1] For examples, see above, pp. 21, 24, 26.

during the mission of the Twelve.[1] He supplements St. Mark's narrative by an explanation derived from Mt 10^{23}. Is not this *in principle* precisely the same procedure as Professor Burkitt's, when, with far more probability, he combines St. Mark with St. Luke's hints of Herod's hostility?[2] Is not the *method* that of the commonplace critic who has recourse to the growing enmity of the scribes and Pharisees? The fact is, all have to read between the lines of the Gospels, to supplement and interpret; the only question is, which interpretation is the most probable.

And, not to be further tedious on this point, similar considerations apply briefly to what Schweitzer says about "psychologising" and "modernising." It is quite true that, as Professor Burkitt has reminded us, we must not make Jesus the hero of a modern psychological novel. But we cannot escape from psychology, and Schweitzer's theory that Jesus was possessed throughout by the ever-present belief in the nearness of the end, is a piece of psychologising, no less than the view that His main interest was in inward religion. He attempts to "read the mind of Jesus" when he holds

[1] See above, p. 17.

[2] *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, pp. 90 ff.

that He believed Himself the Messiah of the future, as much as those who try to trace a development of His Messianic consciousness. And as to modernising, he seems to understand by this the attribution to Jesus of any religious or spiritual idea which would make the smallest appeal to our own age. After all, it may turn out that the charge of modernising, and of false modernising, will lie at the door of those who ascribe to Him their own absorbing interest in the recently studied apocalyptic literature, rather than of those who hold that He came to reveal the Fatherhood of God, and the joy of communion with Him. The study of the Jewish Apocalypses is the *dernier cri*, and the New Testament student is just now steeped in eschatology. There is a danger in our taking our own enthusiasm and transferring it bodily to Jesus. We assume that He was nourished on apocalyptic literature as His Bible, and breathed daily an atmosphere impregnated by the ideas of the Book of Enoch. Is it not possible that a future generation will reproach the eschatologist himself with creating a Christ after his own likeness?

Again, Schweitzer has been supposed, especially it would seem by Tyrrell, to vindicate sacramental teaching as an authentic element in the mind of Jesus. He insists rightly on

the importance of "sealings" in eschatological thought.[1] Men sought for a guarantee that they would pass safely through the tribulation and secure their place in the kingdom. This guarantee could be found in some external sign of which the "mark on the forehead" of Ezk 9 is an early example. Baptism was a similar "sealing," a guarantee of immunity. It is so, as Schweitzer points out, in St. Paul (Ro 6^{1}, 2 Co 1^{22}, Eph $1^{13.14}$ 4^{30}), the *Psalms of Solomon* (xv. 8), and Hermas (*Vis.* iii.; *Sim.* ix. 16). St. Paul further speaks of other saving marks (Gal 6^{17}, 2 Co 4^{10}), and the idea is, of course, prominent in the Apocalypse. This is the key to the baptism of John. It is not *contrasted* with a future baptism of the Spirit, but *connected* with it. Those who are baptized by him can depend on receiving the subsequent outpouring of the Spirit which is to come in the last days. John's wrath at the coming of the Pharisees and Sadducees is due to his fear that by being baptized they may secure for themselves a place in the kingdom to which they are not entitled or foredestined.[2] Baptism forms part of "the predestinarian thought of election."

Further, the Messiah can give the right to

[1] Pp. 375 f.

[2] This is apparently the meaning of the paragraph at the top of p. 377.

partake of the Messianic feast of the future. Here is the true significance of the feeding of the five thousand, which is an "eschatological sacrament." "With the morsel of bread which He gives His disciples to distribute to the people He consecrates them as partakers in the coming Messianic feast, and gives them the guarantee that they who had shared His table in the time of His obscurity would also share it in the time of His glory. In the prayer He gives thanks not only for the food, but also for the coming kingdom and all its blessings. It is the counterpart of the Lord's Prayer, where He so strangely inserts the petition for daily bread between the petitions for the coming of the kingdom and for deliverance from the πειρασμός."[1] Of course no one

[1] P. 374. Schweitzer's treatment of this miracle is interesting. He makes great play with the "rationalism" of O. Holtzmann, who suggested that "in the feeding of the multitude Jesus showed 'the confidence of a courageous housewife who knows how to provide skilfully for a great crowd of children from small resources.' Perhaps in a future work Oskar Holtzmann will be less reserved, not for the sake of theology, but of national well-being, and will inform his contemporaries what kind of domestic economy it was which made it possible for the Lord to satisfy with five loaves and two fishes several thousand hungry men" (p. 307). We naturally turn eagerly to his own explanation (p. 374). "Our solution is that the whole is historical, except the closing remark that they were all filled. Jesus distributed the provisions which He and His disciples had with them among the multitude, so that each received a very little after He had first offered thanks." The method may

but Himself had any suspicion of this hidden significance.

Naturally the same principle is applied to the Last Supper, which is a guarantee to the disciples that they will soon drink with Jesus of the fruit of the vine in the kingdom. Hence baptism and the Lord's Supper were from the first "eschatological sacraments," though the former was not instituted by Christ, and He certainly did not contemplate any repetition of the latter. Before, however, we fasten unwarily on the admission of the sacramental character of these rites, it will be well to understand exactly in what sense Schweitzer uses the word *sacrament*. He really means *magic*. He emphasises the fact that at the feeding of the five thousand, the people had no idea of the significance of what was taking place. "The sacramental effect was wholly independent of the apprehension and comprehension of the recipient."[1] Baptism is purely predestinarian; there is no ethical side whatever to Schweitzer's "sacraments." In view of the normal use of the word, in England at any rate, it would seem

be useful in dealing with the problems raised by the Gospel miracles; the raising of Lazarus is all historical—except the statement that he came forth from the tomb. Only most people would call it not only rationalising, but somewhat unintelligible rationalising.

[1] P. 378, n.

better to substitute for it in Schweitzer's argument some such phrase as magic rites;[1] otherwise the unwary may be misled as to his real meaning. One of the grounds on which he commends his view is that by it we are not compelled to "make the history of dogma begin with a 'fall' from the earlier purer theology into the sacramental magical."[2] That is, we have the advantage of ascribing this "fall" or inferior teaching, not to St. Paul or second-century Christianity, but to Jesus Himself.

A similar caution is necessary with regard to what Schweitzer says about the Church. It will be well to quote his exact words. The texts which deal with "binding and loosing" are probably quite genuine. "If one has got a clear idea from Paul, 2 Clement, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Shepherd of Barnabas what the pre-existing 'church' was which was to appear in the last times, it will no longer appear impossible that Jesus might have spoken of the church against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. Of course, if the passage is given an uneschatological reference to the Church as we know it, it loses all real meaning, and becomes a treasure-trove to the Roman

[1] On p. 379 he uses the phrase "magic-sacramental."
[2] P. 378.

Catholic exegete, and a terror to the Protestant."[1] We remember that not even the Twelve were chosen with any idea of continuing Christ's work after His death. On the eschatological view there is, of course, no room for anything like a "Church" in the modern sense, whether organised or unorganised. There was no time for missionary work, and no need for pastoral work.

[1] P. 369, n. 1.

CHAPTER IV.

THE POLITICAL MESSIAH.

We have spoken of some of the elements of the eschatological theory which may at first sight seem to be attractive: the claims to adhere closely to the text of the Gospels, to avoid reading between the lines, modernising and psychologising, and the vindication of the originality of the teaching as to sacraments and the Church. We have seen that these claims must be largely discounted before they can be admitted as in any sense valid. There are other features in Schweitzer's book which are not even superficially attractive. The chief is the tone of positive and even arrogant dogmatism, which cannot help offending, because it is so obvious that the writer commits precisely the same sins as those for which he blames his predecessors unmercifully. Examples have already been given of this; and the same criticism may fairly be applied to the way in which he asserts without proof, or with

very insufficient proof, things which are by no means self-evident. How can he be so certain that Jesus can never have intended to spiritualise existing conceptions of the Messiahship and the kingdom? Why was it quite impossible for Him to anticipate persecutions for His followers in the future, except in the light of the eschatological woes?[1] Were there not sufficient analogies in the Old Testament stories of the prophets, and the sufferings of the pious in the Maccabæan period? Was the attitude of the ruling classes of His day such that He could have anticipated smooth water for the new religion, assuming for the moment that some such thing was after all in His mind? Or, again, is it quite self-evident that the prophecies of death and resurrection must be completely historical as they stand, or else entirely false?[2] Jesus might well have anticipated and spoken of His death, and after the event His followers might have equally naturally, and quite innocently, supposed Him to have also anticipated His Resurrection. Of course other views are equally tenable, but this is an entirely reasonable one from a

[1] Pp. 333, 348. It need not be denied that the eschatological doctrine of the "woes of the Messiah" throws a valuable sidelight on Christ's expectation of sufferings; the point is that it is not the sole, or only tenable, explanation.

[2] P. 331.

certain standpoint, and at any rate cannot be summarily waived aside without argument.

But perhaps the most serious case of assertion without proof is the denial that there was in our Lord's time any expectation of a political Messiah. Schweitzer holds that the *only* Messiah whom the Jews of His day looked for was the eschatological Messiah, the superhuman Being who was to appear on the clouds of heaven at, not before, the regeneration. Dr. Sanday[1] has rightly called attention to the paradoxical character of this position, and confesses himself unable to understand what exactly Schweitzer means when he denies that there was any political element in the Messianic hope of the Jews. The point is of considerable importance, and it will be well to look closely at the available evidence.

(1) We cannot ignore the Old Testament. We find there the expectation of a Davidic King, and a series of prophecies which, if they are not merely political in themselves, were at least easily susceptible of a political and earthly interpretation. The eschatological hope arose later on, and became popular. We should then expect *a priori* that the two strains would continue side by side, sometimes one, sometimes the other, being prominent in a

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 81, 99.

particular circle or period; neither was likely to oust the other. And this is, in fact, what we find; both conceptions lived, and but little attempt was made to harmonise the contradictions which resulted from the blending of the two.[1]

(2) The best proof of the existence of the political element in the Messianic hope may be found in the often-quoted passages from the *Psalms of Solomon*,[2] where the Messiah is the Son of David, who will purify Jerusalem from the Gentiles who tread her under foot, and destroy her enemies by the word of His mouth. It is difficult to understand on what grounds Schweitzer denies the existence of a political element in this conception.[3] It is,

[1] See Baldensperger, *Die Messianisch-Apokalyptischen Hoffnungen des Judenthums* (1903), pp. 105 ff. Also Oesterley and Box, *Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, chap. x. There is a most exhaustive article by W. V. Hague on the "Eschatology of the Apocryphal Scriptures," in the *Journal of Theological Studies* (Oct. 1910). He sums up: "In the literature of later Judaism we meet with two very different views as to the nature and origin of the Messiah. On the one hand, he appears as a merely human ruler who is to bring about a period of quasi-material prosperity in the future, to destroy the enemies of Israel, and to inaugurate an era of ethical regeneration on earth. On the other hand, he is represented by the apocalyptic writers (in close connection with the idea of divine judgment) as a wholly supernatural being, depicted in characteristically mythical colours, and viewed as the initiator of the new 'Golden Age'; in other words, emphatically as a God-king."

[2] Esp. Ps. 17–18.

[3] P. 367, n. 1.

of course, true that they belong to a period a hundred years before Christ's ministry, but that does not affect their value as proving the survival of the earthly and political element *after* the eschatological conception had arisen.

(3) As Schweitzer himself points out, "Mark, Matthew, and Paul are the best sources for the Jewish eschatology of the time of Jesus."[1] In the same way, the New Testament as a whole, with which for our present purpose we may couple Josephus, will be our best authority for the nature of the Messianic hope of His day. There is no doubt that in the first century A.D. there existed among the Jews a strong political and revolutionary element, eager for revolt against Roman oppression, and anticipating an earthly dominion for the nation. The Zealots, the frequent rebellions, the attempts to make our Lord King, and His execution as a claimant to the throne, are sufficient proofs of this. It is true that it is a question how far the revolutionary movements were *directly* connected with the Messianic hope, but they show that there was an inflammable material, which the appearance of a Messiah would have quickly kindled into flame. It is really incredible that the nationalist party could have entirely abandoned

[1] P. 366.

to the eschatologists an asset so valuable as that of the Messianic kingdom. No doubt the outlook of the average Jew embraced both conceptions, and he would not have been careful to reconcile their contradictions. In Dr. Sanday's phrase, "from the time of the Maccabees to the time of Barcochba there was a Messianic background—or something like it—to every popular movement that swept over Palestine."[1] And as he points out,[2] Josephus connects the Jewish war with the Messianic hope, when he speaks of the influence of the ambiguous oracle that "about that time one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth."[3]

It is, then, fairly clear that Schweitzer has no right to say that our choice must lie between the acceptance of the purely eschatological conception of the Messiahship, and the stroking out of the Messianic claim as unhistorical. It is still possible to believe that Jesus may have said or implied, "I am Messiah, but not the Messiah of your popular expectation"; there were elements which He may after all have wished to spiritualise.[4] We must consider in this connection the nature and purpose of the "Messianic secret" of

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 81. [2] *Ibid.* p. 100. [3] *B.J.* VI. v. 4.
[4] Does not the narrative of the Temptation imply this?

Jesus. Schweitzer rightly makes much of this, and perhaps one of the most valuable features of his book is the emphasis with which he has stated the view that Jesus did not openly claim to be Messiah, and was not publicly recognised as such till the end. But our acceptance of this Messianic secret as a clue to the life of Jesus does not commit us to the whole eschatological position. Indeed, in Schweitzer's pages we are completely bewildered by Jesus' attitude towards His Messiahship and His secret. We remember that He was by no means pleased at Peter's confession at Cæsarea. Why, then, did He ask the question which led up to it? Why is He continually, in Schweitzer's phrase, "playing with His secret"? He nearly betrays it when in the hearing of the multitude He identifies the Baptist with Elias; He "plays with His Messianic self-consciousness before their eyes" in the entry into Jerusalem, in the question about the Davidic Sonship of the Messiah, and on other occasions. Unless all this has a serious purpose, it seems trivial, and unworthy of a man with a solemn mission. Was it, or was it not, advisable that the people should know that He was the Messiah of the future? We remember that there is no question now of elevating or purifying

their ideas; Jesus is supposed simply to have adopted the current belief as He found it, adding to it His conviction of the extreme nearness of the kingdom, and the identification of Himself with the Son of Man. We are told that He wished to provoke the Pharisees to put Him to death. Then why not declare openly and at once the secret, the betrayal of which ultimately led to His condemnation? If, on the other hand, He wished to avoid death, or at any rate death on this charge, what was His object in trifling with this solemn mystery, and incurring unnecessary risks of discovery? Apparently the only answer Schweitzer would give is that we are dealing with "an incalculable personality."

But on the ordinary view the purpose of the Messianic secret is intelligible. Jesus did wish to declare Himself as Messiah, but not to be regarded as the Messiah of popular expectation. There were, in fact, elements in the current belief which He desired to eliminate, or spiritualise; and He realised that if His claim were widely known, it might be made the excuse for political agitation. There is therefore something which He can reveal only to those who have ears to hear, to those who can interpret the mystery aright. He does not

play with His secret purposelessly, but treats it in the only way the conditions of the case will allow. He was Messiah in a sense which embraced all that was worth preserving both in the political and in the eschatological conception, but which was identical with neither. And when He does reveal His secret, whether to His disciples or his enemies, though the Parousia is future, His claim is to be already the Christ.

We suggest, then, that the denial of a political element in the Messianic hope of Jesus' day is not justified by the available evidence, and that it makes the reserve with which He veiled His Messianic claim purposeless and unintelligible. And once this is admitted, a great part of Schweitzer's criticism of current views of the life of Christ loses all its force.

CHAPTER V.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF JESUS.

It may be said that the foregoing criticisms, whether valid or not, at any rate affect only the details of the eschatological theory. No doubt this is partly true; but it will not be denied that some at least of these details, and particularly the question as to the "political Messiah," are of considerable importance. And it is always wise to test the details of a hypothesis, so long as we do not concentrate our attention too exclusively on subsidiary points and forget the main thesis, by the soundness of which the hypothesis must ultimately be judged. We have already stated this central thesis. It is that the mind of Jesus was dominated throughout by the belief that the end of the world was to come immediately, the kingdom to be established supernaturally in place of the existing world-order, and He Himself to be revealed on the clouds of heaven as the Son of Man. It is admitted that this conception has been to some extent obscured in our

existing authorities, but it is claimed that its workings can be clearly traced a little way below the surface, and that it is the key, the one and only key, to the right understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus, both in outline and in details.

It will be well, first of all, to emphasise the fact that Schweitzer's view is absolutely uncompromising and thoroughgoing. The requirements of the eschatological position are not satisfied by those who hold that the expectation of the Parousia was a more or less *subsidiary* feature in the teaching of our Lord and the hope of the Early Church. There is all the difference in the world between the view that such a belief was somewhere in the background, occasionally protruding itself in a way which was never quite harmonised with the general tenor of Jesus' life and teaching, and Schweitzer's view that it was all and everything. He is himself very ready with his criticism of such a view as that of Keim's, who admits the eschatological element, but practically allows it to be cancelled by the spiritual.[1] And he would undoubtedly ask that his theory should either be accepted practically as it stands, or else rejected *in toto*. He is not one who would be content with compromise, or acquiesce in

[1] P. 213.

conciliatory conferences, wherein he and his opponents might find a common basis of agreement. No doubt we ourselves may feel that even if we are unable to follow him all the way, we have learnt much from his presentation of the Gospel story, and that what we have learnt will modify, and even modify profoundly, our reading of certain features in the life of Christ. But such a partial and carefully guarded assent will not make us "eschatologists" in Schweitzer's eyes. His watchword is "thorough." It is the thoroughness of Johannes Weiss[1] which arouses all his enthusiasm. "At last there is an end of 'qualifying clause' theology, of the 'and yet,' the 'on the other hand,' the 'notwithstanding.' The reader had to follow the others step by step, making his way over every foot-bridge and gang-plank which they laid down, following all the meanderings in which they indulged, and must never let go their hands if he wished to come safely through the labyrinth of spiritual and eschatological ideas which they supposed to be found in the thought of Jesus. In Weiss there are none of these devious paths: 'Behold the land lies before thee.'" Weiss forces us to

[1] *Die Predigt Jesu Vom Reiche Gottes.* The eulogy applies to the 1st ed. (1892). The 2nd and enlarged ed. (1900) shows, alas! "a weakening of the eschatological standpoint."

choose between the alternatives "*either* eschatological *or* non-eschatological. Progress always consists in taking one or other of two alternatives, in abandoning the attempt to combine them. The pioneers of progress have therefore always to reckon with the law of mental inertia which manifests itself in the majority—who always go on believing that it is possible to combine that which can no longer be combined, and, in fact, claim it as a special merit that they, in contrast with the 'one-sided' writers, can do justice to the other side of the question."[1]

The quotation is a significant indication of the writer's temper of mind. No doubt such an attitude has its value, in that it forces us to face facts, and will not allow us to cry peace, when critically there can be no peace. But as applied to the Gospels, surely it carries its own condemnation with it. If there is one thing

[1] P. 237. After writing the above, I was very glad to see a paper by Dr. Percy Gardner (*Expository Times*, September 1910), in which he makes the same quotation from Schweitzer, and emphasises very forcibly the criticism which it suggests. "Systems of such extreme simplicity and logicality have drawbacks. They sometimes make up for the triumph of massacring *buts* and *notwithstandings*, and marching straight to their end, by outraging common sense, and constructing a house of cards which, however fine to look at, will not resist a breath of wind. If their principle is faulty, their consistency only makes them the easier to refute."

clear about the career and teaching of Jesus, it is that we have to deal with a most complicated phenomenon, complicated on its literary, historical, and psychological sides. The palace of truth which the student of the Gospels seeks to enter has many mansions, and we may be quite sure that no one key will fit them all. If we are to do justice to the manysidedness of the Gospels, we cannot dispense with our "qualifying clauses" and our "notwithstandings," however praiseworthy and heroic be the effort to do so.

And it may be said with confidence that nowhere is the compromising and cautious spirit of the "on the other hand" theology more necessary than when we are dealing with the eschatological teaching of the Gospels. It is impossible to deny that there are expressions in the New Testament, and the Synoptic Gospels, and even in the reported words of Christ Himself, which imply that the end of the world was expected very soon. We have no right to gloss or explain away the clear historical meaning of such passages. It is one of the great merits of Schweitzer's book that he has forced us to face this side of New Testament teaching, and to face it squarely and honestly. But because we admit this, we are not bound to shut our eyes to all else in the Gospels; nor

is it scientific to compile for ourselves a marked New Testament with the eschatological passages underlined in red ink, assuming at once "Lo here, and nowhere else, is the pith of Christ's teaching." In fact, we even have to have recourse to "notwithstandings."

There are indeed three qualifying considerations to be borne in mind. (1) We have no right to assume that Christ's apocalyptic language is always to be interpreted in its crudest and most literal sense. This is indeed a side of the question where it is peculiarly difficult to find the right balance. The conventional exegesis of the Gospels has spiritualised and allegorised to such an extent that we feel uneasily that all contact with the historical sense has been lost. The reaction has come, and now everything must be interpreted as baldly and literally as possible, and this when we are dealing with the sayings of an Oriental, and of the greatest religious genius of the world. "For Jesus," says Father Tyrrell, "what we call His apocalyptic 'imagery' was no mere imagery, but literal fact." If we spiritualise, or even admit the presence of a metaphorical element, we are met with the charge of "modernising." Yet, as Professor Dobschütz[1]

[1] *Expositor*, March 1910, p. 209.

points out, we cannot interpret our Lord's language with regard to feasting in the kingdom of God in a crudely realistic sense. And there are the well-known passages where the kingdom seems to be spoken of as inward and present, and therefore in a more or less figurative sense. It is true these may be explained away one by one with some degree of probability, just as the eschatological sayings may be spiritualised, if we take them singly. But in each case we must look at the group of related passages as a whole; and if we do this, we shall find it very difficult consistently to adopt a purely literal interpretation of Christ's teaching about the kingdom.[1] Again, with regard to Mt 10^{23} ("Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel," etc.), of which, as we saw,[2] Schweitzer makes so much, it is clear that the Evangelist himself, even if he understood the saying eschatologically, yet did not take it in its baldest sense. Had he done so, he would hardly have recorded it, after it had been so obviously falsified. And an interpretation which was possible for the Evangelist, cannot have been *a priori* impossible for Christ Himself. We appeal to the parallel

[1] It is important to remember that in Jewish thought the kingdom (*Malkuth*) had a very spiritual side. In meant the sovereignty of God which was to be established in the hearts of an obedient people, though, of course, it had other aspects.

[2] See above, p. 17.

case of St. Paul, who, in spite of his undoubted eschatological beliefs, spiritualises the conception of the kingdom. "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."[1] We have no right to assume that all that was spiritual and inward lay beyond the range of our Lord's thought. And once we admit a figurative element in some of His eschatological language, it becomes simply a question of interpretation (no doubt a peculiarly difficult question) how far it is to be extended.

But one point in this connection is perhaps clear. Making full allowance for the foreshortening, and loss of perspective, which are characteristic of prophecy, we cannot cling to the idea that everything is literal in our Lord's prediction of the end, *except* its immediacy. "The view commonly held by most Christians, that our Lord promised to return on earth at a far distant date unknown to Himself, does not seem to have any support in the New Testament. The day and hour, we read, were unknown; but the predictions, as they stand in our documents, clearly assert that the return, or coming, of the Son of Man was imminent."[2] We can hardly suppose that Christ was

[1] Ro 14^{17}; cf. the article of Dr. Gardner, referred to above.
[2] Dr. Inge, "Sermon," in the *Guardian*, 13th May 1910.

speaking figuratively when He spoke of the time of His return, and literally when He spoke of its manner. If we spiritualise "this generation," we must spiritualise the clouds of heaven and the trumpet.

(2) If our Lord did to some extent use the conventional language in a more or less symbolical sense, His followers may well have continued to interpret it literally; and if He uttered any eschatological sayings, they may have added to their number.[1] The strength of the eschatological belief in the Early Church is probably sufficient proof that He did to some extent countenance it. On the other hand, the very popularity and prevalence of apocalyptic ideas in the first century, a point on which so much stress is laid, and the fact that men readily have recourse to them in a time of spiritual excitement, combine to increase the probability that an undue emphasis may have been laid on this element of our Lord's teaching. It is usually believed that we have an instance of this tendency in the "Little Apocalypse" of

[1] Dr. Sanday was at one time, at any rate, inclined to this view, at least with regard to the Gospel predictions of the nearness of the Parousia. See article "Jesus Christ" (Hastings' *DB.* ii. p. 635). There are three questions which should be carefully distinguished: (1) How far was the current apocalyptic language generally interpreted crudely and literally? (2) In what sense did our Lord use it? (3) What meaning did the Evangelists attach to it?

Mk 13 and parallels. "The kingdom of God come with power" of Mk 9^{1} becomes, in Mt 16^{28}, "The Son of Man coming in His kingdom," the eschatological colouring being thus emphasised. Where in Lk 6^{46} we have the simple saying, "Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" in Mt 7^{21} we find, "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," the "in that day" of the next verse strengthening the eschatological reference.[1] Generally speaking, the first Gospel is much the most "eschatological," and the third the most "spiritual," the second standing about midway between them. We have seen that Schweitzer practically ignores St. Luke. The question arises whether the eschatology has been over-emphasised in St. Matthew, or overlaid in St. Luke. The answer may not be easy, but we have no right to assume at once that what most of us would regard as the lower point of view must be nearer to the original teaching of Jesus.[2]

[1] Cf. Dobschütz, *loc. cit.*

[2] The Fourth Gospel spiritualises the whole idea of the Parousia, a fact which may remind us that such a conception is, at any rate, no "modernism." Weiss (*op. cit.* pp. 60 ff.) taunts Wellhausen (who adopts the spiritual view) with taking refuge in this Gospel. But is not this a case in which the later writer, though furthest from the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus, may yet be the truest interpreter of His spirit?

(3) Let us grant that the eschatological sayings of the Gospels are all authentic, and are to be interpreted in the literal sense. Even then we may claim that this element is not predominant; it is rather secondary and in the background. Once more St. Paul supplies us with an instructive analogy. St. Paul's belief (at any rate at one period of his life) in an immediate Parousia is even more certain than Christ's; we have his own words at first-hand. Yet surely no one can maintain that the eschatological idea is with him central and all-pervading. It never, so far as we can see, seriously affected his practical policy, which was to spread the kingdom of God, or the Church, upon earth here and now, as a new power in the midst of existing society; it but seldom affected his ethical teaching;[1] and though it is an element in his doctrine, yet there are many and important sides of this which are worked out quite independently of eschatology. What has the thought of an immediate Parousia to do with his view of the Atonement or justification, his Christology, or later doctrine of the Church? And if St. Paul's belief in eschatology left room, no doubt somewhat inconsistently, for other ideas, it is rash to deny that the same may have been the case

[1] 1 Co 7 is a probable exception.

with Jesus. The parallel shows that the "eschatologist" is not always consistent and thoroughgoing; he may have other sides to his character and message.[1]

Once more we repeat that the immediate question before us is not whether Jesus believed in the nearness of the end, but whether this belief had the paramount importance which Schweitzer claims for it. That it had not, is proved by the direct evidence of the Gospels, which contain much that can only be interpreted eschatologically by a *tour de force*. This becomes almost self-evident when we pass to the ethics of Jesus. Is it really possible to reduce all that is authentic and important in His teaching to an *Interimsethik*,[2] appropriate only to the short and peculiar period intervening before the end? It may, no doubt, be claimed that such a view throws light on certain sayings. "Take no thought for the

[1] Cf. Dr. Gardner, *loc. cit.* "Alas for St. Paul! He does not understand the conditions of German criticism. He weakly speaks of the kingdom as future, and at the same time as present. He falls into the snare of *but* and *notwithstanding*. He even dares, in company with all the great leaders in the history of the world, to be inconsistent, and to direct his writings rather to the building up of a Church, and the salvation of his hearers, than to the formulation of a thoroughly thought-out system of interdependent propositions."

[2] See above, p. 14. Weiss (*op. cit.* pp. 148 ff.) bravely tries to show that the command to love one's enemies is essentially eschatological!

morrow": providence is superfluous in view of the approaching end; "away with your cloak and coat": you will not need them for long; "hate father and mother": family ties are soon to be superseded. But it is impossible to work out the idea consistently. As we saw, an extreme predestinarianism has to be invoked in order to make it even superficially probable, —a predestinarianism which even claims the Beatitudes for its own! It is significant that the English exponents of Schweitzer's view have not given any very great prominence to this particular element of the theory; very few, in fact, will be found to take it seriously. But Schweitzer is right from his own standpoint in working it to its utmost limits. For, as he tells us again and again, and as Tyrrell repeats after him, Jesus was not a great moral teacher. By discovering predestinarianism everywhere, he comes very near to proving this. For there is not much danger of our finding an ideal system of ethics in the words of one who taught that a poor wretch was to be cast ignominiously from the banquet of the kingdom, simply because he was not predestined thereto, quite apart from any moral disqualification, or that another who had turned his back on his duty, might yet secure his place without any question of conversion, if it should turn out

that the all-powerful will of God had so determined.[1]

If, however, we refuse to read this predestinarianism into the most straightforward passages, Jesus remains the great moral teacher the world has always considered Him, and His teaching is certainly not that of an out and out eschatologist. "When we recall the prevailing tone of ethical teaching, and still more the habitual attitude of the Teacher to the world in which He found Himself, it is difficult to see in it a predominating quality of indifference to the world's affairs, or a complete preoccupation with a supernatural catastrophe. On the contrary, the ethics of Jesus exhibit on the whole a kind of sanity, universality, and applicability, which are independent of abnormal circumstances, and free from emotional strain. There is nothing apocalyptic in the parable of the Good Samaritan, or in the appropriation by Jesus of the two great commandments, or in the prayer for to-day's bread and the forgiveness of trespasses, or in the praise of peace-making or of purity of heart. Yet in these, and not in the mysterious prophecies of

[1] It may not be superfluous to refer the reader to the quotations given above on pp. 15 f., in order that he may assure himself that this outline is not, as might be readily imagined, exaggerated.

an approaching desolation, the conscience of the world has found its Counsellor and Guide."[1]

It is indeed almost incredible that the "moralism of the Gospels" should be, in Tyrrell's phrase, "incidental," and that the appeal which Christ has made to the world as a great moral teacher should be the result of an accident, of the persistent misinterpretation of His sayings, or of additions made to them in our Gospels. He did, in fact, lay down principles which were to govern life lived in a world much the same as that He Himself knew, only marked by an increasing sense of the nearness and love of God. Perhaps He did expect that the end was soon to come; no doubt His outlook was "other-worldly," and His followers are encouraged to fix their hopes on "the good time coming"; but the point to be emphasised is that when He speaks about Fatherhood and Sonship, God's gift of love and man's duty of love, about forgiveness and salvation, service and humility, He is not, as a rule, speaking of the end at all. He speaks timelessly and absolutely, and what He says is as applicable, and has been found as applicable,

[1] Peabody, "New Testament Eschatology and Ethics" (*Transactions of the Third International Congress of the History of Religions*, ii. p. 309).

with no undue straining of meaning, to a world that lasts for centuries, as to one that was to pass away in a few months.

There is, then, good reason to believe that Schweitzer's single key will not fit all the doors, even if it fits any of them. It is, as we have seen, doubtful whether his view does justice to the eschatological passages themselves; it certainly does not do justice to the other sides of the character and teaching of Christ, as we find them in the Gospels.

J. Weiss has indeed admitted[1] that the eschatological point of view is not consistently maintained by our Lord; He does sometimes "seek to improve and help [the world], as though it were destined to continue." But it is not superfluous to point out that the theories of the *Interimsethik* and Predestinarianism cannot be quietly dropped as excrescences. They are essential to the consistency of the eschatological hypothesis. If they are removed, we can believe once more that Jesus did deliberately set Himself to save and reform the world as it is, and not merely to proclaim its immediate disappearance. The fact is that the sense of the nearness of the end is, as Harnack points out, an element in the preaching of most reformers at a time of crisis. But

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 134 ff.

it is only the fanatic who applies it with a narrow, logical consistency to the exclusion of every other point of view. We have every right in the case of our Lord to refuse to be tied down to the final choice between "eschatological" and "non-eschatological." We reply boldly and unblushingly that we will have both. And if a difficulty arises from admitting the existence of a certain amount of inconsistency between the two sides, that difficulty is theological, not psychological or historical.

CHAPTER VI.

THE JESUS OF ESCHATOLOGY.

If Schweitzer is convinced that the eschatological idea was the predominating influence in the mind of Jesus, he is no less convinced that the future of religion is bound up with its disappearance. "The whole history of Christianity down to the present day, that is to say, the real inner history of it, is based on the delay of the Parousia, the non-occurrence of the Parousia, the abandonment of eschatology, the progress and completion of the 'de-eschatologising' of religion which has been connected therewith."[1] "The tragedy does not consist in the modification of primitive Christianity by eschatology, but in the fate of eschatology itself, which has preserved for us all that is most precious in Jesus, but must itself wither, because He died upon the Cross with a loud cry, despairing of bringing in the new heaven and the new earth—that is the real tragedy. And not a tragedy to be dismissed with a

[1] P. 358.

theologian's sigh, but a liberating and life-giving influence, like every great tragedy. For in its death-pangs eschatology bore to the Greek genius a wonder-child, the mystic, sensuous, Early-Christian doctrine of immortality, and consecrated Christianity as the religion of immortality to take the place of the slowly dying civilisation of the ancient world."[1] It is indeed admitted that the problem of how this exclusive system of eschatology developed into a world-wide religion has as yet been "hardly recognised, much less grappled with. The few who since Weiss' time have sought to pass over from the life of Jesus to early Christianity, have acted like men who find themselves on an ice-floe which is slowly dividing into two pieces, and who leap from one to the other before the cleft grows too wide."[2] But it is worth while noting the paradoxical character of the position. It implies that the success of Christianity has depended on the gradual elimination of that which was primary and central in the mind of its founder.

Both Schweitzer and Tyrrell emphasise the fact that this view does away with the necessity of postulating an immediate deterioration, by which primitive Christianity fell away at once from its supposed original purity and per-

[1] P. 254. [2] P. 252.

fection. No doubt this is true; but, as we have already remarked,[1] the result is attained at the expense of Jesus Himself. We might lessen the gap between Shakespeare and his successors by depreciating his work in every possible way, and assigning large sections of it to unknown writers of a later period; but literature would not gain much by the process, and we should only have succeeded in lowering the world's estimate of Shakespeare. The fact is that in religion as in art, the disciple is not above his master; the genius reaches at a bound heights which later generations can hardly hope to keep. The theory of a "fall" from the original purity of Christ's teaching is, in fact, in accordance with all analogies, and only emphasises the uniqueness of the Founder of the new religion.

We have touched on a question which leads to our final and most serious criticism. What sort of Christ does eschatology give us? Schweitzer concludes with a somewhat curious and enigmatic chapter, entitled "Results." He seems to realise that his "historical Jesus" will be a stumbling-block to many. "He will not be a Jesus Christ to whom the religion of the present can ascribe, according to its long-cherished custom, its own thoughts and ideas,

[1] See above, p. 38.

as it did with the Jesus of its own making. Nor will it be a figure that can be made by a popular historical treatment so sympathetic and universally intelligible to the multitude. The historical Jesus will be to our time a stranger and an enigma."[1] "We are experiencing what Paul experienced. In the very moment when we were coming nearer to the historical Jesus than men had ever come before and were already stretching out our hands to draw Him into our own time, we have been obliged to give up the attempt and acknowledge our failure in that paradoxical saying: 'If we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him no more.' And further, we must be prepared to find that the historical knowledge of the personality and life of Jesus will not be a help, but perhaps even an offence to religion."[2]

But he finds his compensation in the thought of the "mighty spiritual force [which] streams forth from Him and flows through our time also. . . . It is the solid foundation of Christianity."[3] Eschatology, he maintains, has thrown into clear relief the utter contrast between the modern world-affirming spirit and His world-negating spirit. "Why spare the spirit of the individual man its appointed task of fighting

[1] P. 396. [2] P. 399. [3] P. 397.

its way through the world-negation of Jesus, of contending with Him at every step over the value of material and intellectual goods—a conflict in which it may never rest? For the general, for the institutions of society, the rule is: affirmation of the world, in conscious opposition to the view of Jesus, on the ground that the world has affirmed itself! This general affirmation of the world, however, if it is to be Christian, must in the individual spirit be Christianised and transfigured by the personal rejection of the world which is preached in the sayings of Jesus." He came indeed to send on earth not peace, but a sword. "He was not a teacher, not a casuist; He was an imperious ruler. . . . He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old by the lake-side He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou Me,' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and as an ineffable mystery they shall learn in their own experience who He is."[1]

There is no mistaking the sincere religious

[1] P. 400 (the concluding paragraph of the book).

tone of such words, enigmatic though they are. We must not pause to discuss how far it is necessary to acquiesce in the somewhat desperate conclusion that the world as organised in the institutions of society must always be "in conscious opposition to the view of Jesus"—not merely to the literal meaning of His teaching, but to the very spirit which lies behind His words. We have to ask rather in what relation "the mighty spiritual force" of Christ stands to the historical Jesus of eschatology. We might fairly raise the crucial question of the Resurrection, of which Schweitzer has nothing to tell us; but this is not a difficulty peculiar to the eschatologist, and it is discussed at length elsewhere in these pages.[1] It will, however, be sufficient to refer to the portrait of Jesus in the days of His flesh, as it appears painted by the brush of the eschatologist. We see One whose whole life was based on a fundamental error, whose every action and word were dictated by His all-absorbing belief in the nearness of the end, whose knowledge and will were thwarted by predestinarianism, who asked with regard to each one He met whether he was sealed according to the predestination of God. We find Him forcing facts to fit the framework of His eschatological theory, and

[1] See below, "Loisy's View of the Resurrection."

"almost cursing with cruel harshness" the Apostle who had ventured to speak about His death. He plans to "provoke the Pharisees and the rulers that they will be compelled to get rid of Him," and "plays with His secret" aimlessly and purposelessly. He dies upon the Cross with a cry of despair at the failure of His hopes; and the future of the religion, which paradoxically enough has based itself on Him, has depended on the elimination of that which He counted most dear and important. Expressions such as visionary, or fanatic, come readily to the pen, and they are not a whit too strong. The picture Schweitzer has drawn is not one-sided; it is a caricature.

The question may fairly be raised how far the repellent traits of this portrait are to be regarded as accidental, and how far they are inherent in the presuppositions of the eschatological theory. The answer is to be found in Tyrrell's pages. His *Christ of Eschatology* is but little more attractive than Schweitzer's, though the more brutal touches are omitted. Tone down the harsher colours as we will, it seems impossible that a Jesus dominated by an error and living for an illusion can ever retain the reverence of the world. The retort will, no doubt, be made that in saying this we are only confessing our own modernity; we

are refusing to leave Jesus in His own age. Our reply must be that He does in fact belong to every age. It is one thing to admit that He did to some extent share the beliefs of His time, while rising far above them in all that is of the essence of religion. It is quite another to find the all-absorbing interest, and the motive power of His life, in a single peculiar, and not very spiritual, class of Jewish ideas.

It may, of course, be said that, at any rate, eschatology does not give us a merely human Jesus; it tells us of One who claimed from the first to be the Danielic Son of Man, a Divine, pre-existent Being. No doubt it is of this that Dr. Sanday is thinking when he says that Schweitzer "does not, like so many critics, seek to reduce the Person of Christ to the common measures of humanity, but leaves it at the transcendental height at which he finds it."[1] Eschatology certainly emphasises the fact, which is coming to be recognised more and more from other points of view, that even the Synoptists do not set before us a merely human teacher or prophet, and that Christology is not a late and mistaken development. It ascribes to Jesus Himself the claim to be more than man. But at what cost, and under what conditions? It regards His claim to be the

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 88.

Son of Man as inseparably bound up with His belief in the nearness of the end, and the Parousia on the clouds of heaven. To the eschatologist the one belief is as central and important as the other.[1] If, then, the one-half of Jesus' claim has been completely falsified, is it likely that the world will readily accept the other? The cogency of the dilemma *aut Deus aut homo non bonus* has hitherto rested on the reluctance of mankind to accept the second alternative; it has clung to the belief that Jesus is at least the perfect example. Can this be any longer said of the Jesus of eschatology?

Can we really reverence such a figure? And can we conceive how "a mighty spiritual force" can have flowed from it for the regeneration of the world? It will hardly be maintained that this is in fact the Christ who has won the admiration and love of the

[1] Schweitzer himself seems to recognise this. "The 'Son of Man' was buried in the ruins of the falling eschatological world; there remained alive only Jesus 'the Man'" (p. 284). "The names in which men expressed their recognition of Him as such [*sc.* authoritative ruler], Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God, have become for us historical parables. We can find no designation which expresses what He is for us" (p. 401). "The kingdom of heaven; His own Christhood; the temporal immediacy of the End, were the three organic constituents of the Apocalypse of Jesus. Of these the last was in some sense principal in point of motive, power, and inspiration" (Tyrrell, *op. cit.* p. 172).

ages. Schweitzer indeed admits that He will not be readily understood or "popular." And yet we remember that when He was on earth "the common people heard Him gladly," and that the simple and unlearned were invited to come to Him and learn His secret. And this may remind us for our comfort that the Christ of eschatology, if He is not the Christ which Christianity has known, is not after all the Christ of the Gospels either. He is, as we have seen, not even the Christ of the purely eschatological passages, unless we insist on interpreting them in their narrowest and most crudely realistic sense. And when we pass to other elements in the narrative, elements which, as a whole, we have no reason for rejecting as unhistorical, the one-sidedness of the portrait becomes still more apparent. What has become of the teaching about the universal Fatherhood of God and His loving care, which embraces this world as it is as well as the next? The hope of the Jewish Apocalypses is frankly based on despair of this world as altogether given over to the Evil One. God has practically failed in it, and a new world must be called in to atone for that failure. Where can we find this pessimism in the preaching of Jesus? Does He not accept and rejoice in all that is pure and lovely in

Nature and in home-life as the gifts of the same Father? He came eating and drinking, sharing the innocent pleasures of a simple society, sympathising with the joys and sorrows of man as He found him.[1] This is hardly the attitude of one whose single message was the passing away of all such things. The teaching about forgiveness as seen in the parable of the Prodigal Son, or about the love of the Shepherd seeking the lost sheep, is not what we should expect from a thoroughgoing predestinarian. When Jesus spoke of the duty of service, as in the parables of the Good Samaritan or the Sheep and Goats, of the taking up of the Cross and the losing of life for His sake, was He really only thinking of principles which were to be valid, and in practice, for a few months? For we remember that "there is for Jesus no ethic of the kingdom of God." "To serve, to humble oneself, to incur persecution and death, belong to the ethic of the interim just as much as does penitence."[2] Are we really "creating a Christ in our own likeness," when we attribute to His conscious purpose the enunciation of

[1] Bousset has specially emphasised the "joy of life" found in Jesus' teaching, arguing that this is quite incompatible with the eschatological theory.

[2] P. 364.

those timeless principles of religion and morality which are in no way the discovery of modern German criticism, but have been in truth the inspiration of Christianity from the beginning?

Schweitzer and Tyrrell compare the Christ of eschatology with the Christ of liberal, or protestant, German criticism, and pour unlimited scorn on the latter. No doubt such critics as Harnack and Bousset do give us what Dr. Sanday has called "a reduced Christianity." But it is a Christianity which is true as far it goes, and it is something on which we can build. They portray for us a Christ whom we can unreservedly admire and love, even if it is a little doubtful whether logically we ought to worship Him. The Jesus of eschatology it is difficult either to admire or to love; worship Him we certainly cannot.

II

M. LOISY AND THE GOSPEL STORY

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The publication of Loisy's *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*[1] coincided with the wave of excitement which accompanied their distinguished author's excommunication, and the Modernist controversy as a whole. The sympathies of English students could only be on one side, and these extraneous and accidental circumstances made it difficult to appraise dispassionately the value of Loisy's commentary. By now, perhaps, the halo of martyrdom is a little less dazzling to our eyes, and it is more possible to examine the books in the light of common day. No one can refuse to acknowledge their exhaustive and scholarly treatment of their subject, or the lucidity and charm of their style, but there can be no doubt that to most readers they have proved a disappointment. When critics of the calibre of Sanday, Salmon, Ramsay, Burkitt, Allen, and Harnack had done so much to vindicate the general historical

[1] At the close of 1908.

accuracy of the Gospels, we seemed to be moving towards something of a fixed position in their criticism, but here the whole question is thrown back indefinitely. With Loisy in one's mind, it is possible on hardly any point to speak of "the unanimity of modern critics," and it is safe to say that the Gospels have never received more drastic treatment from one who stood within the pale of historic Christianity.

Now the two volumes which comprise the commentary are somewhat terrifying in size, and probably more people are ready to talk about them than to read them. It may, then, be of service to attempt a sketch of Loisy's position at somewhat greater length than has been possible in the ordinary reviews. For it is well for those who defend Loisy, sometimes with greater enthusiasm than knowledge, to realise clearly to what they are committed. We may sympathise with him sincerely and respectfully in the treatment he has received, and admire unreservedly his devotion to the truth, but most of us will probably prefer to pause before we accept his critical conclusions.

We need only state summarily his view of the Gospels themselves, as helping us to understand his estimate of their historical value and of their picture of Christ, which is the main

theme of his book. Briefly, he throws back the three Synoptic Gospels to late dates, St. Mark to about 75, St. Matthew and St. Luke to at least the close of the first century. They are not, even in part, the work of their traditional authors; and what is more important, they are in no sense first-hand authorities. "En ce qui concerne l'origine des Synoptiques, il paraît certain que pas un d'eux ne repose directement et complètement sur la tradition orale, qu'aucun d'eux n'est l'expression immédiate de souvenirs gardés par un témoin" (i. p. 81). Even St. Mark, the earliest, is "une œuvre de second main," "une œuvre de foi beaucoup plus qu'un témoignage historique" (p. 84). They are all three composite documents, many stages removed from the original facts, and have been drastically edited under influences which we shall consider later. Loisy's main interest with the "Synoptic problem" is to show that neither where our documents agree nor where they differ, can they be regarded as resting on any sound basis of fact.

We proceed to outline the career of Jesus as Loisy conceives it (i. pp. 203 ff.). The troubled state of Palestine under Roman rule and Herodian misgovernment had produced a prophet. A certain John appeared preach-

ing the near fulfilment of the national hopes, and the approach of the kingdom of God. Among his hearers there found Himself, more or less by accident, one Jesus, born at Nazareth some thirty years before. He already, as it seems, believed Himself to be called by God, to be the chief agent in the proclamation of the kingdom, and was ready, like others, to be baptized by John. This experience deepened the conviction of His call, and on the prophet's imprisonment He decided to carry on his work. He adopted the idea of the kingdom as He found it, with its traditional Judaic setting (i. p. 225), and the one theme of His preaching was its imminence, together with the necessity of repentance for those who looked for a share in it. It meant the future rule of God and of righteousness upon earth, inaugurated by a resurrection, which need not be conceived of as sweeping away the material world. "La notion évangélique du royaume n'est pas si spirituelle; les hommes qui y auront part seront en chair et en os; ils ne se marieront pas, parce qu'ils seront immortels, mais ce n'est point par pure métaphore qu'on se les figure assemblés dans un festin" (p. 238). He Himself is to hold the chief place therein, and in that sense He is the Christ. But He is only the Christ of the future; He is not so

yet; hence the reticence as to His claims. "En fait, il n'y avait pas de Messie tant qu'il n'y avait pas de royaume" (p. 213). This is the central idea of His conception of His person; titles such as "Son of God" or "Son of Man," if used at all, were vague and general, and of no real significance as explaining who He was. His ethical teaching was transitory, not having in view the normal requirements of social life of His own or any other period, but laying down the conditions for entrance into the kingdom, which was soon to sweep away the existing order of things. "Toute la morale de l'Évangile est donc subordonnée à la conception eschatologique du règne de Dieu" (p. 236).[1] This teaching was marked by a strong independence, an originality of selection; also by great simplicity; and both of these features attracted the people. Parables or simple metaphors played a large part in it; but were in no way designed to veil the truth from the unready, as our Evangelists have falsely imagined. Though we are told that the first three Gospels "représentent fidèlement la substance de l'enseignement donné par Jésus" (p. 82), yet such large deductions must

[1] Loisy here seems to adopt the *Interimsethik* of J. Weiss and Schweitzer; *i.e.* Christ's teaching was intended only for an interval which was expected to be short. See above, pp. 14, 60 ff.

be made from this admission that we wonder where we can rely on finding the real meaning of Jesus, let alone His exact words. The parables have been much edited; some are entirely due to the Evangelists. Generally "il est à présumer que les disciples mêmes ne firent jamais aucun soin pour retenir ce qu'ils entendaient, et que leur mémoire garda seulement ce qui les avait le plus frappés" (p. 187). Only striking fragments remain, and of these the meaning is often disguised by their setting and combination. Probably none of the "words from the Cross" are authentic (ii. p. 684). A saying such as that of Mk 9^1 ("There be some here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God come with power") is genuine because untrue; but as actually spoken, it was probably still more untrue, and Christ is presumed to have said, "Those here shall not die," etc. (ii. p. 28). We are reminded of the "foundation pillars" of Schmiedel's article.

More or less against His will, Jesus appeared as a worker of miracles. Here the facts have been grossly exaggerated in our records, under the influence of "faith," "symbolism," and so on, and the details are quite unreliable; but He probably did work a certain number of cures in nervous diseases, particularly in those

supposed to be due to demoniac possession. A few months was enough to attract the attention of the political authorities, Antipas in Galilee and the ruling caste at Jerusalem, and Jesus retired for safety to the north. Here comes the crisis of the ministry; the disciples confess their belief in His Messiahship, and, encouraged by this, their Master decides to declare Himself at Jerusalem. "Là est le terme assigné à la préparation du règne de Dieu. Jérusalem est le passé, la ville des grands souvenirs; c'est le présent, le lieu des réunions nationales; c'est aussi l'avenir, car une Jérusalem nouvelle doit surgir à la place de l'ancienne" (i. p. 213). The decision was dangerous, and the disciples realised it. So did Jesus Himself. But He never lost His faith that somehow God would intervene by a miracle and save Him. "Jésus n'allait pas à Jérusalem pour y mourir; il y allait pour préparer et procurer, au risque de sa vie, l'avènement de Dieu" (p. 214). The events of the next few days accentuated the danger, but still there remained the hope. "Jésus n'avait pas laissé de la (sc. *la catastrophe*) prévoir, mais il n'avait pas cessé non plus d'espérer le miracle" (p. 218). That indeed was the ground of the prayer in Gethsemane. No miracle, however, came; He was arrested,

and at once hurried before Pilate, who condemned Him to death with little hesitation as claiming to set up a kingdom. Jesus, in fact, could not deny the charge; for His mission, as He understood it, "n'était pas l'institution d'une société spirituelle, compatible avec tous les pouvoirs humains, c'était l'instauration complète du règne de Dieu, à la place de la tyrannie des hommes" (p. 221). Of the Crucifixion practically no details are known; He died with some loud cry on His lips, and was buried, probably by the soldiers, in the common grave. "Ainsi finit le rêve de l'Évangile; la réalité du règne de Dieu allait commencer."

Not unnaturally we exclaim "how"? For to the historian the curious fact is that from this career, in no way unique, hardly out of the common, there has arisen a religion which has dominated the civilised world, and which still has some hold even over educated minds. M. Loisy himself believes in it sincerely. How then did it come about? Apparently because Jesus was followed by a succession of men of spiritual power and literary genius who proved able to develop in a most unexpected manner a somewhat unpromising material. A few of them are known to us by name, in particular a certain Paul of Tarsus; the

majority are remembered only by fragments of their work. They include the series of writers to whom we owe the Gospels, the "Christian prophets" who are responsible for their poetry (i. p. 256), or such men as the "croyant de génie" who has given us the account of the Transfiguration (ii. p. 33).

The first step was soon taken. The impression made by Jesus on His followers was too strong to be effaced merely by His death. "Le travail intérieur de leur âme enthousiaste pouvait leur suggérer la vision de ce qu'ils souhaitaient" (i. p. 223). The wished-for visions soon came, the earliest apparently to Peter by the lake of Galilee, in the half-light of the morning; a late and artificial version of this is preserved in Jn 21. Others followed; and it was, of course, quite a natural thing for simple folk to believe in a Resurrection, to stake their lives on the fact, and to find in the belief a force sufficient to renew the face of the earth. "Nul ne contestait que Jésus fût mort sur la croix. Nul ne pouvait démontrer qu'il ne fut pas ressuscité" (p. 224). The need of some proof was, however, felt later on, and this was met in two ways. Nothing was known of the burial of Jesus; His friends had perhaps tried to find His body, and their failure gave rise to the legend of the empty tomb (i. p. 178,

ii. pp. 721 ff.). To the final editor of the second Gospel this was in itself sufficient, and he concludes his narrative with its discovery, thinking it unnecessary to add details of any appearances of the risen Christ. Legend soon defined "the third day" as the date. In popular belief the spirit haunted the body till this time, and a resurrection afterwards would be inconceivable. The "third day" was further identified with the first day of the week, because Christians were in the habit of meeting together on that day, and pagan converts naturally fixed upon it as being "the day of the sun."[1] Possibly also the influence of the Old Testament was at work, in the parallel of Jonah, or the "third day" of Hos 6^2 (i. p. 177, ii. p. 723). Loisy forgets to remind us that this passage is never quoted in the New Testament.

The second proof of the Resurrection itself was also found in the prophecies of the Old

[1] This extraordinary argument should be noticed. All our evidence shows the "first day" as established in the usage of the Church before Gentile influence had had time to make itself felt. No doubt later on its appropriateness as "the day of light" was realised (*e.g.* by Justin), but this could hardly have led to its choice. And to suggest that Christians fixed on Sunday as the day of the Resurrection, because for some unknown reason they were in the habit of observing it as a day of worship, may well stand as a classical example of hysteron-proteron.

Testament. "Il est de toute invraisemblance que les textes de l'Ancien Testament aient suggéré aux disciples de Jésus la résurrection de leur Maître; mais ce qui paraît certain, c'est que cette idée, aussitôt que née, chercha son appui, sa défense, sa preuve, dans les Écritures, et qu'elle les y trouva" (i. p. 176).

The crucial step of a belief in the Resurrection having been taken, further developments quickly followed, particularly under the influence of St. Paul. Dr. Sanday, in the *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* (ii. p. 886), says: "We need to examine with all the closeness in our power the nature of the relation between St. Paul and Christ — or, *what almost amounts to the same thing*—between the Epistles (as represented by their central group) and the Gospels." But Loisy by no means regards these two statements of the problem as identical. For him, our Gospels are impregnated with Paulinism, St. Mark, the earliest, no less than the rest; in fact, rather more. The author was probably "grand partisan de Paul"; "son évangile est une interpretation paulinienne, volontairement paulinienne, de la tradition primitive. Son paulinisme ne tient pas seulement à quelques expressions, à quelques lambeaux de phrase ou de doctrine qu'il aurait empruntés à l'Apôtre

des gentils; il est dans l'intention générale, dans l'esprit, dans les idées dominantes et dans les éléments les plus caractéristiques de son livre" (i. p. 116). It was St. Paul who discovered a wide significance in the death of Jesus, as "a ransom for many." It was not so in His own view. "Jésus a regardé sa mort comme possible, et, dans certain éventualité, comme la condition providentielle du royaume qui allait venir, mais non comme un élément nécessaire en soi de sa fonction messianique; il l'a envisagée comme un risque à courir, un péril à affronter, non comme l'acte salutaire par excellence auquel devait tendre son ministère, et duquel dépendait essentiellement tout l'avenir" (i. p. 243). Under similar influence the idea of forgiveness of sins has been introduced into a simple miracle, such as the healing of the sick of the palsy, giving a new turn to the whole episode (i. pp. 108, 476). It is to St. Paul that we owe the whole narrative of the institution of the Eucharist; the very words of consecration are derived from him: "Ce doit être lui qui, le premier, a conçu et présenté la coutume chrétienne comme une institution fondée sur une volonté que Jésus aurait exprimée et figurée dans la dernière cène" (ii. p. 541). The only basis of fact was a supper held at

Bethany, in which Jesus promised His disciples a share in the Messianic feast.

Under such influences the person of Jesus assumes a new importance; He was not merely the Messiah of the future kingdom; He was Christ on earth. He becomes the incarnate Wisdom of God; He will appear again as Judge. "Jésus apparaît comme juge et non comme témoin; il ne présente pas les hommes à son Père; il vient dans la gloire du Père, et accompagné des anges. Cette mise en scène apocalyptique est aussi dans le goût et les idées de Paul" (ii. p. 26). He must then be supposed to have known of His approaching death and to have understood its necessity. Prophecies of it are readily placed in His mouth. The predictions we find in the Gospels "sont visiblement dominées par une double préoccupation théologique et apologétique, à savoir, montrer que le Christ avait prévu sa fin" (ii. p. 16). He must be protected against the carping of unbelievers! "La dignité du Christ est sauvée, dans le récit de Gethsémani, par un acte formel de résignation à la volonté du Père" (i. p. 181). Generally with regard to His knowledge of the future, "on ne se borna pas à gloser les paraboles primitives, on en créa quelques-uns" (p. 190). Why, then, were the Apostles so completely

taken by surprise? Simply because they were obtuse and unworthy of their Master. This explanation has the advantage of exalting the far-seeing (or imaginative?) Apostle of the Gentiles, at the expense of his Galilæan predecessors. The second Gospel is dominated by this idea; examples may be found in the refusal of the thrones to the two sons of Zebedee, in the praise of the exorcist "who follows not us," in the rebuke to Peter after his confession[1] (i. pp. 96, 117, ii. p. 20). The "first shall be last, and the last first," is a vindication of the position of St. Paul. We seem to remember something of this sort in the criticism of fifty years ago, and had imagined it was somewhat out of date.

It remained to emphasise the sin and unbelief of the Jewish nation in rejecting its Christ. This result is attained not merely by a certain heightening of the opposition between Jesus and the Pharisees, or by an increased stress on their hypocrisy; the central facts have been manipulated in a startling way. The whole narrative of the trial before Caiaphas is due to a desire to transfer the guilt from the Roman to the Jew (i. p. 181). "Le procès devant Caïphe est une fiction apologétique"

[1] We note that St. Matthew is supposed to be free from this tendency (ii. p. 7); yet he narrates the rebuke.

(p. 111). The denial of Peter is the only solid fact between the arrest and a brief morning consultation of the Sanhedrin to prepare the charge which was to be presented before Pilate (ii. p. 595). St. Luke's account of the trial before Herod is a trace of another attempt to do the same thing (p. 640). The Barabbas episode is again a legend with the same tendency; possibly it has some slight historical basis.

Once more, when the Gospels took their present form an organised Church existed. In fact, Jesus had no idea of founding any society; it was unnecessary, if the kingdom was so near. He chose the Twelve as preachers of that kingdom, not at all as the first of a long line of successors. This gap, again, was filled without hesitation, and we find much which contemplates a Church, with its officers, its organisation, and its worship; all this is entirely unhistorical. This is particularly the case in St. Matthew, where ecclesiastical interests are strongest. We may instance the promise to St. Peter, which, we are told, represents accurately the position of the Church and of St. Peter's successors in the writer's time (ii. p. 12). In other cases the details of the picture merely represent the later usage of the Church. In St. Luke's

account of the Baptism, "on croirait assister, et l'on assiste en effet à un baptême dans les premières communautés chrétiennes" (i. p. 411). The accounts of the feeding of the five thousand and of the Last Supper are both largely coloured by the customs of the Agapé and the Eucharist as actually celebrated in the Church of later days.

Generally speaking, Christian apologetic and Christian faith have been everywhere at work, the former particularly in the first Gospel. Faith surrounded the head of its hero with a halo; He tends to become omniscient; claims are put in His mouth which express the later views of His followers. "Dans tous ces développements, ce n'est plus seulement la foi qui domine le souci de l'exactitude historique: il en a été ainsi dès le commencement; c'est la dévotion, née de la foi, qui se satisfait dans les peintures qui lui semblant les plus dignes de son objet" (i. p. 182). The narrative of the Transfiguration, which is supposed to have been originally a legend of a post-Resurrection vision, is an example of this tendency. But fancy was particularly busy with the question of the origin of the Master. The first conception was that of a unique consecration in the Baptism. This was felt to be insufficient, and

myths of the Virgin Birth arose, with which go the connected stories of the Magi, the visits to the Temple, etc. It will be readily understood that the Abbé takes the most severely critical view of their origin. They are "pieuses fictions"; "l'ensemble des anecdotes, y compris celle de Jésus à douze ans, n'a rien qui dépasse les facultés moyennes d'invention des hagiographes populaires à toute époque et en tout pays" (i. p. 197; cf. pp. 139, 169). He differs from others of the extreme school only in the very low estimate he forms of their literary and imaginative value; of this more later. We note that he believes that their origin is to be looked for on Gentile soil, not so much in mythological ideas as in the tendency to conceive of the Divine Sonship as something which must be materially realised (i. p. 339).

As in the Resurrection story, so here the influence of the Old Testament has been strongly felt. Is 7^{14} did not, indeed, create the belief in the Virgin Birth, but it served as a valuable proof thereof. In *L'Évangile et l'Église* (p. 24) the Abbé laid down the principle with regard to the Old Testament that "il serait plus juste de dire qu'elle colore la plupart des récits, que d'affirmer qu'elle en a créé quelques-uns." His present view seems to go beyond that.

The story of the Magi is regarded as suggested by the star of Balaam's prophecy. The hymns of St. Luke are merely imitations, not very successful or appropriate, of Old Testament songs. The announcement of the betrayal is probably inspired by Ps 41[10]; the flight of the young man naked, by Am 2[16]. Most startling of all, the fourth word from the Cross ("My God," etc.) has nothing of the crucial significance usually assigned to it; it simply expresses the Christian conviction that Ps 22 was Messianic, and could be applied to the Crucifixion (ii. p. 684).

We pass on to consider a further factor of which Loisy makes much, the influence of symbolism. The details of the Gospel story must have a meaning, and were freely, and more or less deliberately, invented to convey that meaning. Whole incidents, narrated as fact, are really only picturesque symbols of spiritual truth. Many of the miracles are explained in this way. The draught of fishes is an allegory of the success of the Gospel among the Gentiles, just as the rejection of Nazareth had figured its failure among the Jews (i. p. 439). So in the raising of the widow's son at Nain, "la veuve désolée représente la fille de Sion, Jérusalem menacée de perdre Israël, son fils unique, et le perdant en

effet, pour le recouvrer miraculeusement par la puissance de Jésus" (i. p. 655). The feeding of the five thousand is in origin the expansion of a metaphor about spiritual food; $5+2=7$, the perfect number; the twelve loaves are the inexhaustible treasures of the Gospel. "A lire le premier narrateur, on se douterait à peine qu'il s'agit d'un miracle, le récit flottant, pour ainsi dire, et très consciemment, entre le symbole et la réalité" (i. p. 938). It is indeed not always clear how far the symbol was realised, or how far the miracle was literally understood by the Evangelists. But to Loisy the allegory is not something added to the fact; it has produced the fact—or rather the fiction.

The principle is not only called in to explain the miraculous; it accounts for much which to the ordinary reader looks like the most innocent detail. The "after six days" of the Transfiguration is symbolic of a mystic week (ii. p. 30). Did Christ's friends mourn His death? It is an allegory of the universal mourning of nature (p. 698). Do we read of two thieves on whom the Crucifixion made an opposite impression? It is not fact, but "le mauvais larron représente la judaïsme incrédule, la foi du bon larron représente la conversion du monde" (p. 677). We hear of two sisters,

Martha and Mary; they are an allegory of the Jewish and Gentile sections of the Church, and Loisy feels himself unable to gainsay those who see in the story nothing more (p. 105). The "mountains" of the first Gospel are all pure symbol (p. 745). "La pâque du dernier repas dans les Synoptiques, et celle du crucifiement dans le quatrième Évangile, le sabbat de la sépulture, et le dimanche de la résurrection sont des données symboliques, dont il est maintenant difficile à l'historien de dégager le point de départ dans le réalite des faits" (p. 700). We cannot, indeed, distinguish between fancy and fact; the mysterious realm of the sub-conscious self comes to our aid. "Paul n'a pas pris pour traditionnel un récit où il avait mêlé sa propre doctrine; le mélange s'est fait de lui-même dans la région subconsciente de l'âme où se préparent les visions et les songes" (ii. p. 532, n. 1). We may compare an eloquent passage in i. p. 195, unfortunately too long to quote; the enthusiastic faith of the first century was not troubled to draw any distinction between vision and reality.

What are we to say of all this? Perhaps our first word would be that if the Roman Church is ever to excommunicate, it could hardly be expected to hold its hand here.

But, after all, a man's views are not always to be received as truth, because he has been excommunicated, and sympathy with one whom we may regard as the victim of persecution must not be allowed to blind our judgment. In the first place, most Christians of every school will be with us in an amazed protest against the extraordinary lack of taste (to call it nothing worse) which marks these volumes. Sarcasm and irony are mercilessly invoked to call attention to the "absurdities" of the Gospel narrative; phrases such as "enfantin," "banal," "d'une invention très faible," "escamotage littéraire," are continually applied to it. The raising of the widow's son is "un récit sans originalité"; the Apostles were "ni les êtres obtus que dit Marc, ni les personnages de vitrail que montre Luc" (i. p. 167); the details of the trial before Pilate are "de traits qui conviennent mieux à la fiction légendaire qu'à l'histoire, et qui ressembleraient plutôt à un effet de théâtre, dans un mélodrame ou une pièce enfantine, qu'à la réalité" (ii. p. 644). A passage on the stories of the infancy has already been quoted; it by no means stands alone. "Rien n'est plus arbitraire comme exégèse, ni plus faible comme narration fictive" than the second chapter of St. Matthew; nor is it

much better to read that in St. Luke's account "le merveilleux est moins banal et moins enfantin" (p. 169). He has, too, the lowest opinion of the Evangelists' style—St. Mark has "aucun goût littéraire"; St. Matthew, "une médiocre invention"; St. Luke's style is "inégal, maniéré, on oserait presque dire truqué." The dedication to Theophilus is "pompeuse et banale" (i. pp. 257 ff.). The whole passage should be read with its sarcastic phrases of half-praise to get the full effect. Loisy realises, of course, that his view is, to say the least of it, unusual, and he quotes Renan's well-known eulogy on the other side (p. 260, n. 3). *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*; and one who now attacks the Gospels as literature will not injure *them*. Probably such language has never before been used by a professed believer; when it is, it can hardly expect the mitigation of sentence which may be granted to a Blatchford.

With regard to Loisy's general position, it is impossible here to enter into a discussion of the details of the commentary. Any one at all familiar with modern criticism will have noticed that on many points he can be answered completely from writers of the most extreme school. But one or two general considerations may be allowed. It is usual

with English critics to insist on the fact that they approach the Bible with no prejudice against the supernatural as such. It is not so with Loisy. He states his fundamental assumption quite clearly. The author of the Acts cannot be an eye-witness, because he narrates miracles. "Ne serait-il pas inouï qu'un disciple immédiat des apôtres eût présenté comme a fait Luc les témoignages concernant la résurrection?" (i. p. 172; cf. p. 179). To him the miraculous is not to be marked with a query in the margin, as Sanday has suggested; it calls for the thickest of blue pencils at once. The Gospels as a whole cannot rest on the evidence of eye-witnesses, because they contain miracles. This *a priori* assumption is at least dangerous, some would say unscientific. We remember Harnack's argument. He gives a list of the miracles in the "We-sections" of Acts: "mehr Wunder in wenigen Versen kann man wohl doch nicht wünschen!" The eye-witness (and Loisy himself admits that in this case he was an eye-witness) who has recorded these was quite capable of the miracles of the rest of the Acts and the third Gospel (*Lukas der Arzt*, p. 24).

Again, most readers will feel that the part assigned to symbolism is exaggerated. Few will deny that metaphor has sometimes

been misinterpreted as fact, and allegory transformed into history. With regard, *e.g.*, to such a detail as the darkness at the Crucifixion, most critics will admit that there is as much of symbol as of fact, and will approve Loisy's delightful epigram, "Le ciel est toujours sombre pour une âme désolée" (ii. p. 679). And his commentary on the Fourth Gospel has made us realise that the tendency may have been at work on a larger scale. But even if one admits the possibility with a mystical writing such as the Fourth Gospel, the case is very different with the first three. They read as a whole as simple, straightforward narrative, and to find subtle and hidden allegories in almost every detail, number, place, or saying, is surely a return to an exegesis long discredited. If the episode of the two thieves is merely an allegory of faith and unbelief, there are few incidents in history which cannot be explained as symbol rather than fact. We are reminded of the tyranny of the "Solar Myth," and of Tylor's amusing exposure of its possibilities in *Primitive Culture*.

The fact is, that Loisy approaches the Gospels as they have been interpreted by centuries of Christian teaching, and often reads into them far more than their writers

with all their Oriental mind, ever dreamt of. Naturally we believe that in many cases they selected their facts as typical and significant. But what is typical may none the less remain true as fact. We need no more regard Martha and Mary as symbolic personifications of the Jewish and the Gentile Church, than we regard the two daughters of Henry VIII. as fictitious embodiments of Romanism and Protestantism, because they happen to represent different elements in the English mind of the period.

It is curious, again, to note how, with all his undeniable psychological subtlety, the critic again and again succeeds in missing the obvious, and discovering difficulties and contradictions, which it requires very little ingenuity to explain. He misses the exquisite appropriateness of the reproaches round the Cross, of St. Peter's remonstrance after the first announcement of the Passion, and of Christ's subsequent rebuke, an incident which it is hard to believe invented. He fails to see how true to life is the same Apostle's dazed suggestion of the three tabernacles: "il n'est pas croyable que les trois personnages célestes soient invités à rester pour le plaisir des trois disciples" (ii. p. 36). The pathetic irony of the "Sleep on now" in

Gethsemane is twisted into a literal command, frustrated by the unexpected arrival of Judas. Mary could never have kept the events of the childhood in her heart, because she could not understand them! "On n'a pas coutume de retenir avec soin les choses qu'on n'a pas comprises" (i. p. 382). Difficulties of the most pedantic description are made much of, *e.g.* in the angel's word to Zacharias, "thy prayer is heard," because we have not been specially told that he had been praying for a child; or in the murmurings of the scribes in the healing of the sick of the palsy, because St. Mark had not previously referred to their presence. In the same incident fault is found because the crowd is represented as paying more attention to the miracle than to the forgiveness of sins—a trait altogether true to human nature. Similarly, in the insults before Caiaphas, we read "les 'quelques-uns' qui se mettent à frapper Jésus, arrivent on ne sait d'où" (ii. p. 612), as though every incident must commence with an exhaustive list of the *dramatis personæ*. With regard to the Jewish trial we are told no one could have known the details; "aucun fidèle de Jésus n'était en état de les prendre sur l'heure; aucun ne songea sans doute à les prendre plus tard" (ii. p. 596); the events of the Crucifixion

remained equally unknown; "aucun disciple n'avait souci de recueillir pour la postérité ce qui se passait" (i. p. 179).

Frankly, this is hair-splitting unworthy of M. Loisy and his subject, and such arguments are enough to make even the most careless reader realise that negative criticism is not always the most scientific. The whole treatment is, in fact, *a priori* and subjective to a degree. The true method tries without *arrière-pensée* to analyse the documents, to get to their sources, to estimate their authority. It allows to the full for the influence of all the factors on which Loisy lays so much stress, symbolism, idealising of the past, Old Testament prophecy, and ecclesiastical interests. But it can set a limit to their influence, and as we study our authorities the historical figure of Jesus and the fact of His work stand out all the more clearly. As Harnack has said of the two sources of the Gospels, "where they agree their evidence is strong, and they do agree in many and important points. Destructive critical inquiries . . . break themselves in vain against the rock of their united testimony" (*Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, p. 172).

On the other hand, if we accept the drastic *a priori* treatment of Loisy, we are ultimately

brought to the conclusion that we can know nothing of the historic Jesus. And if the figure and work of Jesus dissolve in mist, how can we explain the fact of Christianity or the consistent, lifelike narrative of the Gospels? The ascription to unknown men of genius will not do. If the story was in the main true, it required no very extraordinary power to tell it for us as it has been told. The magic is in the facts rather than in their presentation. But if the career of Jesus was only what Loisy imagines, the real founders of Christianity were those who developed the story and gave it the form in which it has appealed to the world. Where were such men to be found in the first century? As Professor Burkitt has reminded us, it is not an easy thing to write parables such as those of the Gospels, and after all, as we have seen, Loisy himself has no very high estimate of the abilities of the Evangelists.

But the last word in a discussion such as this will always be, "What of the Resurrection?" The writer's position is not clear. Were the visions true, *i.e.* were they consistent, veridical, objective apparitions of a living being, proving the persistence of personality after death in the sense desired by the Society for Psychical Research? If so,

they form a fact as unique in the history of the world as is the Resurrection as more popularly conceived. And then the story of the life that led up to it must be read once more in the light of its unique sequel. We lose the right to reject all that raises that life above the common run of human experience. If, on the other hand, the visions were merely subjective, the working of the (supposed) intense enthusiasm of the mourners, we are face to face with the old difficulty of explaining the rise of the belief, its persistence and general consistency, its vitality and value for the world. An immortality, such as that ascribed to Keats in *Adonais*, fails to meet the requirements of Christian history and of individual experience. It is a small point that M. Loisy's treatment leaves his own position a psychological puzzle; the crux is that it leaves the fact of Christianity an insoluble historical enigma.

III

M. LOISY'S VIEW OF THE RESURRECTION

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The distinction often drawn between spiritual value and historical fact is, perhaps, nowhere so sharp as in the view of the Resurrection of Jesus held by many modern Christian thinkers. The fact as ordinarily understood, with its historical evidence, is rejected *in toto*; the spiritual reality of the abiding life of Christ is held sincerely and with conviction. The position may be considered from two points of view. It raises the philosophical problem to what extent truth can be built up on error and illusion? What are the limits of the principle that

> "God's gift was that man should conceive of truth,
> And yearn to gain it, catching at mistake,
> As midway help till he reach fact indeed"?[2]

It also raises the historical and psychological

[1] This paper originally appeared independently of the preceding pages.

[2] Browning, "A Death in the Desert."

problem as to how we are to explain the rise of the belief on the supposed premises? The purpose of this paper is to approach the question from this second point of view. It starts from a fact which is not open to dispute, that the first generation of Christians believed sincerely and firmly in the Resurrection. We ask how they came to do so, if the real course of events was at all that supposed by extreme critics. And we will take as typical the view put forward by M. Loisy in *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*.

We may begin by stating as clearly as possible the view which he takes of the Resurrection narrative.[1] In the first place, we note that the predictions of the death and Resurrection ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels are, in Loisy's opinion, unhistorical. They are unhistorical because, according to his reconstruction of the Gospel narrative and his view of the self-consciousness of Jesus, He never really expected to die. He realised

[1] The chief relevant sections in his works are: *L'Évangile et l'Église*, pp. 112 ff.; *L'Autour d'un Petit Livre*, pp. 120, 169 ff.; *Le Qu^me Évangile*, esp. pp. 900 ff.; *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, esp. i. pp. 177, 223 ff., ii. pp. 696 ff.; *Simples Réflexions*, pp. 79, 170; *Quelques Lettres*, pp. 91, 154, 158, 188, 225. The last-named work is of special importance as clearing up certain possible ambiguities. In what follows detailed references have not, as a rule, been given; they will be readily found by those who consult the passages here quoted.

the danger of the course He was pursuing, and the possibility of a fatal termination, but to the last He looked for a miracle to save Him; even the Gethsemane prayer was a prayer for such a Divine intervention. Hence, if we understand M. Loisy aright, there is no room for prophecies of the Second Advent as ordinarily understood, *i.e.* a return after death on the clouds of heaven. Loisy's view is, indeed, strongly eschatological. Jesus expected a crisis which was to end the present æon; there was to be a great *dénouement* by which the kingdom of God was to be established on earth, and He Himself was to be manifested as the Messiah. This was to come unexpectedly and soon (hence the frequent injunctions "to watch"), and was to be accompanied by a judgment. But in that judgment He was to be witness, not judge, and it was all to be accomplished in His lifetime. The importance of this for our present purpose lies in the fact that we are thus debarred from supposing that the ground had been prepared for a belief in the Resurrection by any direct teaching of Jesus Himself.

Again, Loisy holds that the last fact which we know about the Jesus of history is His death on the Cross. Nothing is known of

His burial. He was probably thrown by the soldiers into some common trench where the bodies of criminals were buried,[1] and neither friend nor foe had any record of the spot. The whole story connected with the rock tomb and Joseph of Arimathea is a later addition. M. Loisy emphasises this point very clearly in *Quelques Lettres*. It follows that the narratives of the visits of the women to the empty tomb fall to the ground entirely. It is, therefore, unnecessary to attempt to discover in them any basis of fact by eliminating the angelic appearances and the rest of the miraculous element; it is equally unnecessary to advance any theory of resuscitation, or of removal of the body by the Apostles, Joseph, or any one else, in order to explain the empty tomb. The empty tomb was not the starting-point of the belief in the Resurrection; the stories connected with it form only a secondary stage in its legendary development, being the probably unconscious response to the natural need of external proof. They are, according to Loisy, unknown to St. Paul; in their final development in St. Luke and St. John they contradict the earlier Galilæan tradition, implying as they

[1] Perhaps the "Aceldama" mentioned in connection with Judas.

do the presence of the Apostles in Jerusalem. Hence, they can only have arisen at a time when the production of first-hand evidence was impossible to friend and foe alike. Rejecting the episode of the empty tomb, Loisy naturally also rejects the "third day" as a datum of any historical significance in the development of the Resurrection belief, and this in spite of its attestation by St. Paul. That Christ "rose again the third day," or appeared for the first time on the third day, is regarded by him as a purely legendary embellishment of the story, due in part to the popular belief that the spirit haunted the body till the third day after death, in part to the choice of Sunday by Gentile Christians as the day of worship, as being the "day of the sun," and in part to the influence of the Old Testament prophecies of Jonah and Hosea. These prophecies caused Christian tradition to hesitate for a time between "after three days" and "on the third day." In fact, according to Loisy's view, the belief in the Resurrection was of slow growth, and required some weeks, or even months, before it was fully established. The references in the narratives to the doubts of the disciples are regarded as evidences of its gradual and partial acceptance.

The belief, then, that Jesus was alive did not find its starting-point in the sight of the empty tomb on Easter Day. Its origin is to be sought rather in a psychological necessity; it was the natural reaction from the shock of the Crucifixion, the result of the deep impression Jesus had made on His followers. Of this we shall have more to say later on. We ask now whether this intuitive faith had any facts on which to build, and we are told that it found its first support in a vision of St. Peter in Galilee. This is nowhere fully and accurately recorded in our authorities, but Loisy finds many significant traces of it. It is mentioned by St. Paul and St. Luke, and may have been narrated in some form in the source which Mark followed.[1] It is suggested that it is the basis of the appearance by the Lake in John 21, this episode being intentionally misplaced in the third Gospel, and becoming the miraculous draught of Luke 5. As a Galilæan appearance it could not be fitted in with the Jerusalem manifestations with which alone St. Luke is concerned in his closing chapters. It may, however, have left its traces in the "fish" of Luke 24^{42}, and in the tradition preserved by Origen that "Simon" was the unnamed companion of Cleopas on the

[1] Cf. 16^{7}.

road to Emmaus. Finally, the fragment of the Gospel of Peter seems, where it breaks off, to be about to narrate a similar appearance to Peter while fishing, as the first manifestation of the risen Christ. Whatever be thought of this ingenious hypothesis, we have here what Loisy regards as the first historical fact which criticism can seize after the death of Christ. St. Peter had a vision in Galilee; the nature of that vision will be discussed in due course. Loisy believes that similar visions were afterwards experienced by other disciples, but of none of them have accurate records been preserved, and it is needless to say that in the conversations recorded we hear not the words spoken by Jesus on any particular occasion, but the expression of the faith of the Church. "C'est la voix de la conscience chrétienne, qui parle en Jésus glorifié."

Now it is not our intention to discuss directly and in detail Loisy's critical treatment of the Gospels.[1] The purpose of this summary has

[1] It may, at the same time, be well to point out certain unsatisfactory features. His objections to the burial can only be called trivial. What difficulty is there in the presence of the women at the Cross and the entombment, and why should it be supposed that they have been "dragged in" to serve as useful witnesses when the Apostles by their flight are no longer available? The difficulties with regard to Joseph, Loisy answers himself. And we ask why details such as the "fine linen" and the "new tomb" "procèdent d'un sentiment moral plutôt que

been to show how uncompromising is his position from one point of view. He does not merely hold that the narratives are obscure, and have been subjected to legendary and materialising influences, whilst beneath them is a bed-rock of fact, in a real Resurrection and true appearances, with some messages at least actually delivered. Such is probably the belief of many liberals,[1] but Loisy will have none

de la tradition historique"? There is nothing suspicious in reverent care for the dead. And the mention of the rock tomb is more intelligible as a piece of detail interesting to Roman readers, than as the invented fulfilment of an unidentifiable prophecy. Again, though one is loath for some reasons to find oneself on the side of Loisy's opponent (see *Quelques Lettres*, pp. 191, 227), it is difficult not to see in the speech of Acts 2 a reference to the raising of the flesh from the corruption of the tomb; nor can we admit that the expression of Acts 13^{29} ("they . . . laid him in a tomb") necessarily excludes all knowledge of burial by friends. After all, Loisy believes that the writer of the Acts wrote the third Gospel, and, if so, he obviously held the ordinary view, and had himself described the burial. In fact, we may safely say that the objections to the burial do not arise from any real difficulty in the narrative, but from the necessity of eliminating an incident which the critic would otherwise find very inconvenient. Similarly with regard to the "third day," the explanations of its origin are very unconvincing. The Old Testament references are not enough to explain the belief (Hos 6^2 is never quoted, and Loisy himself admits that the influence of prophecy modified, but was seldom responsible for, the growth of tradition); and though Justin saw the appropriateness of the observance of the first day as being the "day of the sun," there is no evidence whatever that the first Christians, particularly the Jewish Church, were influenced by this association of ideas.

[1] See, *e.g.*, Lake's *Resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

of these half measures. There is for him no fragment of history in the Gospels after the death of Christ; it is all the work of faith. Nor when he says that the Resurrection is not "un fait de l'ordre historique," does he merely mean that it is not *demonstrable* by historical evidence, whilst the fact itself may none the less be true. This possibility is, indeed, left open in his earlier works, but has now been clearly rejected by him. The Resurrection did not take place "si l'on veut entendre par résurrection cette chose inconcevable, le cadavre d'un mort de deux jours se prenant une vie qui n'est pas celle des mortels, et qui néanmoins se manifeste sensiblement."[1]

Now, if this were all, Loisy's position would be simply that of the ordinary "unbeliever," and would require no special treatment. But we know that it is not all. Loisy is a sincere Christian, and has a whole-hearted belief in the present life of Christ as the most important fact of spiritual experience both to the individual and to the world as a whole. Unless we recognise this to the full, we cannot understand the problem as it presents itself to the modern mind. Those who believe in a "spiritual" Resurrection would maintain that the living Christ is manifested in history and in the

[1] *Quelques Lettres*, p. 189.

individual in a unique sense. It is more than the persistence of the influence which every man leaves behind him in a greater or less degree. The Christ, even the historic Jesus of Nazareth, lives in His Church in a sense other than that in which Alexander lived on in the realms which he had quickened with the Greek spirit. The Christian is not content to ascribe to his Master the elusive pantheistic immortality in which Shelley's indignant love clothes Keats. The life of Christ, to those who believe in it at all, is something more personal and more real, because it affects us directly and practically. Now it is comparatively easy for the latter-day Christian to hold such a faith. It has become an integral part of his creed, and he supports it by his personal experience, backed by the wide and varied experience of Christians in all ages, and by the testimony of history. We are not here discussing the validity of this line of evidence, but merely emphasising the undoubted fact that such are the main grounds on which the Resurrection is believed *now* by those who lay little stress on the "empty tomb." But the historical problem is to explain how this belief could have arisen, if we reject the Gospel narrative *in toto*. By what psychological avenue could the Apostles have arrived at it?

We remind ourselves of the conditions as

supposed by Loisy. Jesus had died a felon's death; He had neither anticipated that death, nor warned His disciples of it, though no doubt He realised and spoke of its possibility. Much less had they any promises of the Resurrection on which to build. He had proclaimed a future kingdom, to be speedily established by a miraculous act of God, probably in His own lifetime, when He Himself would be declared to be the Messiah. But this hope had been manifestly frustrated by events. The Apostles had been dazed by the catastrophe, and had fled to their own homes. Yet gradually, within a comparatively brief period, they came to believe that this Jesus was alive and active in a sense in which this could be said of no other departed leader. The belief transformed their views of their Master and of their Bible, changed their characters, and enabled them to begin the conversion of the world, a task which Jesus had never suggested to them in His lifetime. Whatever view we take of the details of the opening chapters of the Acts, we cannot say less than this. The historical fact of the growth of Christianity requires it, and Loisy himself insists continually that the Church was built up on the faith in the risen Christ. How did it all come about? It is a historical problem, and there seems nothing that history

can take hold of to explain it. Did it arise from a study of prophecy? No, says Loisy: "il est de toute invraisemblance que les Textes de l'Ancien Testament aient suggeré aux disciples de Jésus la résurrection de leur Maître."[1] The interpretation of prophecy turned out to be a most impressive method of proof for the new faith once it had arisen, but it did not itself give it birth. An answer which seems more promising is that the belief arose from visions of Jesus, according to Loisy from a vision seen by Peter. The crucial question is, *Of what nature were these visions?* Are we to understand them as in some sense objective?

We touch here on the problem which is being for the first time scientifically investigated by the Society for Psychical Research. In a sense the appearances of spirits, and messages from the spirit world, are facts, *i.e.* certain people have undoubtedly had psychological experiences of this character. Eliminating cases of fraud, we have to ask whether these experiences point to something objective. Do they take their origin from the personality of the departed, and, therefore, correspond to a reality which exists outside of the mind of the percipient? This reality need not be thought of as material; we have only to suppose that it in some way

[1] *Év. Syn.* i. p. 176.

uses the material world in order to communicate with us. Or, on the other hand, are we to regard all such messages and appearances as subjective illusions, projected by the subconscious self of the percipient, and standing in no relation to the personality from which they claim to come?[1] If the first answer be ultimately proved to be true, we shall go some way towards explaining the Resurrection narratives, and that in a sense which both science and religion can accept. If it can be maintained that the appearances and messages of A. after death to B. are really to be attributed to the conscious deliberate effort of A. to communicate with his friend in this world, we have in essence the vindication of the Gospel story. Whether we accepted the Biblical records *in toto* or not, we should have a scientific justification for our belief in the continued life of Jesus. But we may remark that His Resurrection would still remain a unique event in the world's history. It would be unique, because results have come from it which it is no exaggeration to say outweigh the results which have come from all other supposed spirit communications put together; it would also be unique because,

[1] In certain cases we have to reckon with the possibility that they may be telepathic, *i.e.* proceeding from other earthly minds; they are then in a sense objective, but not veridical.

assuming the substantial accuracy of the Gospel records of the manifestations (and on this hypothesis most of the difficulties felt with regard to them would disappear), His appearances have a consistency, fulness, and spiritual value attained by no others, since they enabled the disciples to realise completely the presence of the personality which they loved. Again, if we may believe the suggestion of Mr. Myers,[1] a suggestion which is in itself *a priori* probable, and which is "confirmed" by messages claiming to come from him and Dr. Gurney,[2] the departed spirit finds it hard to communicate on account of the difficulty of controlling the material media which it must use. Now we are in the habit of explaining many of the Gospel miracles by insisting on the control which a perfect personality would have over matter. It is, then, natural to suppose that that same personality would have a unique control of the media of communication after death. Then, as in the days of His flesh, He was the perfect man, in fullest harmony with His spiritual environment, and able to do perfectly what others have only been able to do imperfectly. No doubt this line of thought will fail to satisfy many. To some it will appear unduly rationalistic; they

[1] *The Survival of Human Personality.*
[2] *S.P.R. Proceedings*, June 1908.

would not wish to explain the Resurrection of Christ as being on at all the same lines as the continued life of other men in the spirit world, forgetting that we are only dealing with the means by which His human spirit may have communicated with His friends. Others will insist that the "objective" character of spirit communications is still far from proved. This, no doubt, is the case; we have only attempted to indicate a line of thought which may possibly ultimately be of value. To the writer it is a hopeful line, though he is aware that it cannot be pressed at present, and does not wish to suggest that our belief in the Resurrection is to stand or fall with any such proof.

But the main object of this somewhat long digression has been to press upon those who speak of "visions" in this connection the necessity of defining clearly of what nature they suppose them to be. Are they objective, due to the direct action of the departed spirit, regarded as a living personality, and, therefore, evidence of the life after death? Many will reject this hypothesis, and will maintain that they are purely subjective. This seems to be the view of M. Loisy. To the Apostles "le travail intérieur de leur âme enthousiaste pouvait leur suggérer la vision de ce qu'ils souhaitaient; des incidents fortuits, interpretés

et transfigurés selon les préoccupations du moment pouvaient avoir la même portée que des visions, avec un caractère objectif qui les rendaient moins discutables, si l'on avait songé à discuter."[1] And there are instructive passages[2] in which he speaks of "la région sub-consciente de l'âme, où se préparent les visions et les songes. En l'état d'exaltation où vivaient les premiers croyants, tout ce travail, qui déroute l'analyse par sa complexité, s'est opéré, spontanément et rapidement, dans la région subconsciente des âmes où se préparent les songes de tous les hommes, les hallucinations de quelque-uns, les intuitions de génie." Loisy is not here dealing directly with the Resurrection, but with the developments "de la pensée chrétienne" in general; but he nowhere, so far as I can discover, suggests for a moment that the visions of the Christ are to be attributed to any other source than "la région subconsciente"; he regards them as from first to last subjective.

Now it is quite obvious that to call the visions "subjective" is merely to describe them; it does not explain them, or do away with the necessity for an explanation. This explanation can only be found in the mental condition of

[1] *Év. Syn.* i. p. 223.
[2] *Ibid.* i. p. 195, ii. p. 532, n. 1.

the Apostles. Were they so predisposed to believe in the Resurrection that it became natural to them to see their Master standing before them as "in the days of His flesh"? There were, according to Loisy, two factors to which the visions may be traced. The first was the strong impression made by the personality of Jesus; the second was closely connected with this, the belief in His Messiahship. As the disciples revisited the familiar scenes of the Galilæan ministry, "le passé les ressaisit, leurs souvenirs s'enflammèrent dans la solitude. Ils avaient été trop profondément remués par l'espérance pour que le coup de malheur qui les avait d'abord accablés ne fût par suivi d'une réaction puissante vers le grandiose avenir qui les avait seduits."[1] "L'on perçoit aussi que ces deux facteurs" (*i.e.* the appearances and the argument from prophecy) "ont puisé originairement toute leur force dans la persuasion où étaient les disciples que Jésus lui-même était le Messie."[2] We are bound to ask whether this view is psychologically intelligible. We are not merely dealing with the conviction that the work of a great and good man cannot be cut short by death, and that he will be recompensed hereafter for his unmerited sufferings on earth. The Apostles rose far above the sublime intui-

[1] *Év. Syn.* i. p. 223. [2] *Ibid.* ii. p. 782.

tion of the Book of Wisdom, that "the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God." They believed that their Master was alive and in touch with them in a perfectly unique sense. They did not imagine for a moment that His "spirit" was merely resting on them as the spirit of an Elijah rested on Elisha. We remind ourselves once more that, according to Loisy's view, there was very little in the historical career of Jesus to create an atmosphere favourable to such a belief. Most of the miracles are to be eliminated; the predictions of the "rising again" are unhistorical. The Crucifixion itself came not as something foreseen and allowed for, but as an unlooked-for catastrophe, apparently upsetting all calculations and falsifying all hopes. The shock, indeed, was so great that "les moins timides perdirent toute espérance quand ils virent que le ciel n'avait pas secouru celui qu'ils avaient salué comme le Messie."[1]

Can we, then, base the whole reaction on *the impression of the personality of Jesus*, for the belief in the Messiahship is really only an aspect of this? We are far from wishing to minimise in any way the extent of that impression, though it is a question which will require more consideration than it has hitherto received,

[1] *Év. Syn.* i. p. 222.

whether we can reject so much of the Gospel story as Loisy rejects, and yet retain the right to speak of that personality as unique and unapproachable. But the question at issue is not "how great was the influence of that personality," but "why did it have the particular results supposed?" It is one thing to invoke "personality" to explain certain miraculous cures; we know it does, in fact, work in this particular way. It is quite another thing to urge it as a sufficient explanation of the Resurrection belief. Are there any real parallels? Cases of varying degrees of similarity are, indeed, often hinted at in footnotes. We may suggest that they deserve a more prominent place. For from this point of view the essence of the subject is to study and compare carefully the alleged parallels. Does a leader with a strong personality naturally force on his adherents the conviction that he is alive, that he is manifesting himself, that he is helping them and continuing his work? It is obvious that we must exclude most, if not all, of the alleged parallels from post-Christian times. The stories of the appearances of saints are easily explained from the already existing belief in the appearances of Christ. Given the Gospel narrative and the Christian belief in the Resurrection, it is intelligible that similar stories or

experiences should follow; in fact, it is significant that, comparatively speaking, there are so few. It suggests that the mind of man does not work easily in this groove; it is not so "natural," as certain critics would seem to imagine, that visions should be seen of a man after death, simply because he has been loved and revered. But this by the way. The problem is to explain the first great instance, the belief in the appearances of Jesus. There is nothing like it in the Old Testament, and no real parallel has been adduced from other sources. We should, then, clearly recognise that we are not explaining anything in a scientific sense when we trace the Resurrection belief to the influence of "the personality of Jesus." We are really invoking a psychological miracle. Now psychology has its laws, obscure though they may be, and a phenomenon which seems to contradict all we know of those laws should be a stumbling-block in the psychological realm, no less than it would be in the material. A miracle does not cease to be a miracle because it has been transferred from the sphere of matter to the sphere of mind. And this is precisely what Loisy seems to do; whether he be on the right lines or not, it should, at least, be clearly recognised that he leaves us with a new problem as inexplicable as the old. It is

an historical fact that the disciples believed that Jesus was alive in a unique sense, and the fact calls for a historical explanation. We are offered that of self-caused visions, which in their turn rest upon a faith inexplicable by any known laws of thought.

This difficulty has to be faced by all, whether Christians or unbelievers, who reject all objective manifestations of a risen Christ, and it is recognised by most candid critics as a very real crux. But the difficulty is greatly increased to all who hold the paradox of Loisy's position. They maintain that though the visions to which faith gave birth, and in which it found its nourishment, were false, yet the faith was in the last resort true. Jesus was alive, though He had not manifested Himself in the way imagined. How came it that the faith was true? It must have been an intuition, which can only be explained as a Divine revelation to the soul, an otherwise inexplicable uprush of spiritual genius. Now we admit that the spirit of genius blows where it lists, and that its manifestations are often mysterious and apparently arbitrary. But though those who are the vehicles of such intuitions of genius have nothing which they have not received from the great Unknown, yet we honour them as our greatest men, whether they be artists,

poets, or religious leaders. This particular intuition, that the real work of Jesus was to be carried on by His Spirit after His death, is without question the essential factor in Christianity. Yet, on the view we are considering, it did not come to Jesus Himself. We are told it probably came to Peter. Then, we say it deliberately, Peter or some unknown disciple was a greater religious genius than Jesus, and should be regarded as the real founder of Christianity. Jesus expected speedy and temporal success; He was utterly mistaken in His view of the future, and died with a cry of despair on His lips, leaving His work and hopes a wreck. It was Peter and the Apostles who were able to bring life out of death, because there came to them the sublime intuition to which their Master had never risen, that His spirit would be with them in the invisible world, and that His work could be continued on new lines. Jesus never foresaw failure, Peter triumphed over it. And yet, even in the Roman Church, Jesus and not the other is worshipped as God.

It would seem, then, to be the case that any theory which denies the fact of objective manifestations is hard pressed to explain how the Apostles arrived at their faith. It has to invoke "personality" working in a mysterious

and unparalleled, and therefore almost a "miraculous," manner. It supposes that the belief in question arose unaccountably as a Divine intuition, creating for itself proofs which, though in themselves false, supported a conclusion at bottom true. And yet this is only half the problem which the historian has to face. If it is hard to explain the origin of the belief, it is no less hard to understand how it maintained itself and won general acceptance. One of the sternest tests of life is to keep the heights which Faith has won in her moments of insight. Those who had seen visions, whether objective or subjective (and in considering the impression on the percipients the distinction ceases to be of importance), would certainly feel the need of more tangible evidence "in the light of common day." Still more would the need be felt by those who had not been favoured with such experiences. Now it is perfectly clear that once the Apostles had attained their belief in the Resurrection, they never afterwards wavered in it for a moment. They were able to communicate that belief to the disciples in general and to multitudes of new converts. And, most startling of all, it does not seem to have been seriously contradicted by their opponents. It was not that they preached a purely spiritual Resurrection, which would not

admit of proof or disproof. On the contrary, it is admitted that they proclaimed a visibly manifested, to some extent a material, body; they believed themselves to have spoken with Christ, to have eaten and drunk with Him, if not to have touched Him. Hence, it is startling to read, "Les auteurs de la mort de Jésus ne pensaient probablement plus à lui, quand il leur revint que ses disciples étaient maintenant à Jérusalem, qu'ils déclaraient vivant et immortel le crucifié de Golgotha. Le christianisme était né. On allait essayer de le combattre. Il fallait le discuter. Nul ne contestait que Jésus fût mort sur la croix. *Nul ne pouvait démontrèr qu'il ne fût pas ressuscite.*"[1] Surely from the first the obvious answer to the apostolic preaching was the insistence on the fact of the burial, and the production of the body of Jesus, if possible. It is very curious that until the probably late edition of the story of "the watch" in St. Matthew, and the notices of the Jewish counter-propaganda in the "Gospel of Peter" and in Justin, we have no hint of any attempt to meet the witness of the Apostles. The reason may be found in some such explanation as that suggested by Loisy, but there is no doubt that the hypothesis of the "empty tomb," if it can be accepted,

[1] *Év. Syn.* i. p. 224.

accounts most naturally for the attitude, both of Jews and Christians, in face of the alleged fact of the Resurrection. The possibility of counter-evidence was cut off at the source. We admit that the vanishing of the earthly body is not necessary to a philosophical view of the Resurrection, that it may even be a stumbling-block, since we do not believe in a quickening of its material particles, yet it would seem to have been almost necessary as evidence. Granted the "empty tomb," we can explain the rapid growth and the unhesitating certainty of the Resurrection belief on the side of the early Christians, and the comparative absence of contradiction on the side of their opponents. We do not now touch the philosophical question of its possibility; we merely suggest that the admitted facts are most easily explained by the supposition that this part of the Resurrection story is true in its main features. But it is well to insist that the religion of Christ does not "rest on the fact of the empty tomb." The argument of a well-known popular work of fiction is a libel on the faith of Christians. If it were proved that this part of the Gospel story arose from some misapprehension and must be surrendered in the light of fuller knowledge, the Creed of the Church would remain unshaken. We can believe without such help.

But the question is, Could the first generation of disciples have done so? To say this, is not to claim for ourselves a spiritual height which they never reached. We are heirs of centuries of Christian experience; they were pioneers to whom the greater part of the "evidence for the Resurrection" was still in the future. As we try sympathetically to realise their temper of mind, if we find it hard to understand how they could have evolved their visions from their own inner consciousness, we find it almost equally hard to understand how they could have believed in them so unflinchingly, if they had no external evidence on which to rest.

The purpose, then, of this study is to suggest that the problem of the Resurrection is by no means solved by a criticism which, however ingeniously, analyses almost into nothingness the concluding chapters of the Gospels. Such a criticism is always sooner or later pulled up sharp by the hard fact of the apostolic belief. It should be clearly recognised that until it can give a reasonable account of the origin and permanence of that belief, it is no solution of the problem, however attractive it may be as an exercise in literary criticism. The difficulties, historical and psychological, no less than religious and philosophical, which accompany denial are no whit less serious than those which

accompany belief. And yet let our last word be this. The real dividing line is not between those who accept the historical records of the Resurrection, and those who deny them. It is rather between those who believe in the present power of a risen Christ, and those who reject such a belief as a superstition. From this point of view a Loisy is on the side of the angels, and it is well for the most orthodox to realise that their only quarrel with such a one should be in the domain of logic and proof; they have none when it comes to the question of spiritual value.

IV

PROFESSOR HARNACK ON THE SECOND SOURCE OF THE FIRST AND THIRD GOSPELS

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PROFESSOR HARNACK'S remarkable vindication of the Lukan authorship of the third Gospel and the Acts[1] has been followed by a further volume, in which he examines the second source common to St. Matthew and St. Luke.[2] The first source is, of course, the Gospel of St. Mark, in whatever form it may have been used by the two later Evangelists. Of this Harnack has nothing to say here; he confines his attention strictly to the matter common to the other two Gospels alone. His purpose is by a careful comparison of the two versions, as given in St. Matthew and St. Luke, to obtain a hypothetical reconstruction of "Q,"[3] the

[1] In *Lukas der Arzt.*

[2] *Sprüche und Reden Jesu* (Leipzig, 1907); or in the translation, *The Sayings of Jesus.* The references in this paper are to the German edition.

[3] The source is so called from the German *Quelle*; the old name *Logia* has been dropped as suggesting an identification with the Matthæan *Logia*, which, however probable, must not be assumed.

common source which it is generally agreed must *in some form and in some sense* lie behind both.

He renews the protest which we find in *Lukas der Arzt* against flashy *a priori* theorising, and asks for more "spade-work," a detailed examination of the actual data. "What happens in many other of the main questions of gospel criticism happens here; critics launch out into sublime questions as to the meaning of the 'Kingdom of God,' as to the 'Son of Man,' 'Messiahship,' etc., or into inquiries of 'religious history,' and questions of authenticity decided on 'higher' considerations . . . but they avoid the 'lower' problems, which involve spade-work and troublesome research (bei deren Behandlung kärrnerarbeit zu leisten und Staub zu schlucken ist)" (p. 3). He acknowledges the complications of the problem, the probability of an early harmonising of the text of the two Gospels, the doubts whether Q was used by both in the same form, or whether one or the other may not have gone back at times to an Aramaic original, and the difficulty of deciding on the scope of Q. But the right method puts these questions aside for the moment and "must first confine itself exclusively and strictly to the parts common to Matthew and Luke as

against Mark, must examine these from the point of view of grammar, style, and literary history, and starting from this firm basis see how far we can go." Not till such an inquiry has failed, need the problem be given up as hopeless (p. 2).

The common sections which are the material of the study, comprise about one-sixth of the third Gospel and two-elevenths of the first. Harnack divides them into three groups: (1) Numerous passages where the resemblance is often almost verbal; these are treated of first, and must form the basis of any theory or reconstruction of Q. (2) Cases where the divergence is so great that it becomes very doubtful whether there was any common source at all; they include only Mt 21^{32} and Lk $7^{29.30}$, and the parables of the Great Feast, and of the Pounds (or Talents), and are dealt with separately in an appendix. (3) The numerous and important sections where striking resemblances are combined with no less striking differences. The student does not need to be reminded that these form the real crux of the problem.

We note that Harnack starts from the *resemblances*; this fact is important as explaining his conclusions. It is perhaps true to say that Mr. Allen in his *Commentary on St. Matthew*

is more impressed with the *divergences*, and therefore, as we should expect, reaches a correspondingly different solution of the problem. We shall have something to say later on of the relation between the two views.

Harnack's critical method will be best shown by an example of its actual working:

Text of Mt.	*Variations in Lk.*
Mt 13[16]. *ὑμῶν δὲ μακάριοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοί, ὅτι βλέπουσιν, καὶ τὰ ὦτα* [*ὑμῶν*] *ὅτι ἀκούουσιν.* ([17]) *ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅτι πολλοὶ προφῆται καὶ δίκαιοι ἐπεθύμησαν ἰδεῖν ἃ βλέπετε, καὶ οὐκ εἶδαν· καὶ ἀκοῦσαι ἃ ἀκούετε, καὶ οὐκ ἤκουσαν.*	Lk 10[23. 24]. *ὑμῶν δέ* om. *οἱ βλέποντες ἃ βλέπετε καὶ τὰ* bis *ἀκούουσιν* om. *ἀμὴν* om. *λέγω γὰρ* [*καὶ βασιλεῖς*] for *καὶ δίκαιοι ἠθέλησαν ὑμεῖς βλέπετε* [*καὶ ἀκ.* bis *ἤκουσαν* om.].

"At the beginning Luke inserts an improvement of the style, and a pedantic explanation of the meaning. Blass has rightly struck out from Luke the last seven words of Matthew, following several MSS. 'Hearing' is not found in v.[16], and if the last clause of v.[17] were Lukan it must have run *ὑμεῖς ἀκούετε* (cf. the Lukan text immediately before). Probably Luke did not care to say that the prophets had not heard it; they only had not *seen* it. Luke's insertion of the *ὑμεῖς* is striking, as he usually omits Q's pleonastic personal pronouns. In this case he had at the beginning omitted the *ὑμῶν*, and where he inserts it, the *ὑμεῖς* is

not pleonastic. ἀμήν may belong to the source, but may also have been inserted by Matthew. καὶ βασιλεῖς must be retained in Luke in spite of the indecisive attestation, since its later insertion is not easily explained, while the omission is easy to understand. But if it stood in Luke, it also stood in Q, and δίκαιοι in Mt. is a correction by Matthew, who had a special fondness for δικαιοσύνη. ἠθέλησαν for ἐπεθύμησαν is an obvious improvement in style (ἐπιθυμεῖν only occurs once elsewhere in Mt.). In Q the saying will have run just as in Mt., except for the δίκαιοι (and perhaps the ἀμήν). We notice also the parallelism in Mt." (p. 22).

The extract has been chosen more or less at random, simply as a fair illustration of the principles adopted in the investigation.

1. As regards *text*, Harnack does not deal directly with questions of textual criticism. He takes the view that Blass and Wellhausen have overestimated the value of D, and of unsupported variants in general, as well as the influence of the Lukan text on Matthew. He prefers Westcott and Hort (p. 5). At the same time we find him abandoning that text in several startling instances, and, as in the case before us, preferring the "Western" text (the evidence for the omission of the final clause of Lk 10[24] is three old Latin MSS). Similarly,

he omits the close of Lk 11^{42}, as interpolated from Mt 23^{23}, the third (or second) Beatitude from Mt 5^{5}, and not merely the third, but also the first two petitions from the Lukan version of the Lord's Prayer, in favour of the petition for the Holy Ghost found in Tertullian, Gregory of Nyssa, and Cod. Ev. 604. We may admit that the text of the Gospels is not yet finally settled, and with Mr. Allen we may be "inclined to believe that the second century readings, attested by the ecclesiastical writers of that century, and by the Syriac and Latin versions, are often deserving of preference."[1] At the same time, in the present state of knowledge, one feels a little uncomfortable at conclusions founded on readings which have been adopted by but few, if any, of the acknowledged leaders of textual criticism.

2. It will have been noticed that in the example cited, nothing is said of the *difference of context* in which the words occur, in Mt. in the explanation of teaching by parables, in Luke after the return of the Seventy. In the same way the section on the aspirants to discipleship (Mt 8^{19}, Lk 9^{57}; p. 12) contains no hint of the fact that St. Luke mentions a third aspirant; and the two versions of the "Lost Sheep" (p. 65) are discussed without

[1] *Op. cit.* p. lxxxvii.

the least reference to St. Luke's closely connected parable of the Lost Coin. As we have seen, Harnack's method is to isolate the parallel sections of the two Gospels, but it is at least questionable whether divergences such as these are not too essential to be ignored.

3. We proceed to the explanation of *differences in language*. St. Luke's variants in the passage before us are explained by considerations of style; St. Matthew's, by the influence of certain dominating ideas. This is, in fact, the general conclusion arrived at.

(*a*) *Changes in St. Matthew.* According to the summary on p. 28, there are thirty-four cases in the first group of passages in which Mt. may reasonably be supposed to have altered the text of Q; thirteen of these are in the introductions to the sections; fifteen betray his dominating ideas, *e.g.* "Heavenly Father," "Heaven" for "God," etc. These peculiarities are found in all parts of his Gospel, and are therefore presumably not derived from Q. Of a similar character is his fondness for the conception "righteousness," as in 6^{33} and our illustrative passage (13^{17}). More significant are the additions of πρῶτον in 6^{33} (limiting and explaining a hard saying), and of "this is the law," etc., to the Golden Rule in 7^{12} (emphasising the editor's respect for the Jewish law), and

the expansion of the Jonah passage in 12^{40} (interest in Old Testament type and prophecy).

Similar results come from the examination of the second group, where his alterations are about fifty (p. 76). They include the emphasis on "Heaven" and "Father" (particularly in 10^{32}, where "Heavenly Father" takes the place of "the angels"), and on "righteousness" ($5^{6.45}$ $23^{29.35}$; cf. *τέλειος*, 5^{48}); favourite expressions such as the closing formulas in $8^{12.13}$, *ὕπαγε* in 4^{10} 8^{13} 18^{15}, *μῶρος* and *φρόνιμος* in $7^{24.26}$; besides more trivial variations in particles, etc. His interest in the Old Testament is illustrated by the continuation of the quotation in 4^{4}; his Palestinian and Judaic standpoint, by the mention of Jerusalem as "the Holy City" in 4^{5}, by the "Pharisees and Lawyers" (or Sadducees) of 3^{7} $23^{23.29}$, by the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer, and by the addition in 23^{23} [see above for the questionable treatment of the text in these two cases]. Hard sayings are softened in 5^{32} ("except for fornication"), and in 5^{3} ("poor *in spirit*"); the strange and unrecognised reference to the "Wisdom of God" is omitted in 23^{34}.[1]

[1] On the "son of Barachiah" in 23^{35}, see pp. 73, 78, n. 1. If genuine in the text of Mt., it is probably an addition of the editor, and did not stand in Q. Harnack does not discuss the

(*b*) *Changes in St. Luke.* In both groups these are more numerous, 150 in the first, "8 to 10 times more numerous than Matthew's" in the second. They are nearly all due to considerations of style. These are grouped under nineteen heads (pp. 31 and 78); the list is too long to quote *in extenso*; we may instance (1) the use of literary and favourite expressions such as κλαίειν (6^{21} 7^{32}; 11 times in the third Gospel, twice in the first, once in a quotation from LXX), εὐαγγελίζεσθαι (16^{16}). χάρις ($6^{32.33}$; 25 times in third Gospel and Acts, never in Mt. or Mk.) ὑποστρέφειν (4^{1}; 22 times in third Gospel, 11 times in Acts, never in Mt. or Mk.); (2) constructions such as the genitive absolute, or ἦν with the participle; (3) improvements in order and in the connection of sentences. Indeed, the characteristics of Luke's style are so well known that it is unnecessary to dwell on them here; it is enough to note that they are self-evident in his treatment of the Q passages. More important variations are the "egg and scorpion" in 11^{12}

origin or explanation of the supposed mistake, but he rejects unhesitatingly the view which sees a reference to the "Son of Baruch" mentioned by Josephus [*B.J.* IV. v. 4]. The editor might have put a prophecy into Christ's mouth, but not a pure anachronism; he could not intend the words "whom ye slew" to refer to an event which happened in 67 or 68 A.D. On the other side, see Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, p. 343.

(cf. Mt 7^{9}), the rewriting of the obscure Mt 11^{12} in 16^{16}, and the additions in 9^{60} and 12^{41} (cf. Mt 8^{22} 24^{43}). A new version is given of the parable of the Two Builders (6^{46}); the disciples are to heal as well as to preach (9^{2}; cf. Mt 10^{7}); in 11^{42} "love of God" is substituted for "mercy," in 11^{49} "apostles" for "wise men and scribes," in 11^{52} "knowledge" for the "kingdom" (cf. Mt $23^{23.34.14}$). The idea of repentance is added to the parable of the Lost Sheep (15^{7}), and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is emphasised in 4^{1} 11^{13}, and the Lord's Prayer [?].[1]

What, then, do these alterations show us as to the method which the Evangelists have followed in using their sources? Have they made it appreciably harder for us to reconstruct the *ipsissima verba* of Christ? Harnack's answer is important. "We may say that Matthew has treated the sayings [of Christ] with great respect, and in a very conservative spirit" (p. 30). "Special tendencies have had no stronger influence over Luke's version than over Matthew's; rather the reverse. He has corrected the text un-

[1] In a certain number of cases we must allow for the *influence of St. Mark*, where he had matter parallel to Q. It appears in St. Matthew in 4^{11} ("angels came and ministered to Him"); in St. Luke more frequently. It influenced his version of the Temptation in the "forty days *tempted*," and the omission of "and nights"; 14^{34} ("salt") is nearer to Mk 9^{50} than Mt 5^{13}, and 16^{18} ("divorce") rests on Mk 10^{11} as much as on Mt 5^{32} (Q). See pp. 35, 41, 43.

flinchingly in matters of style, which Matthew has apparently almost entirely avoided doing.[1] But although these stylistic corrections are so numerous, we cannot say that he has entirely obliterated the special features of the original before him. We must rather give him credit for having carried out his revision in a conservative spirit, and for having allowed his readers to obtain an impression of the character of the sayings of Jesus. . . . Almost everywhere we may notice that short and pregnant sayings of the Lord are corrected the least; longer speeches have suffered more; the encroachments reach their height in the narrative portions" (p. 80).

The investigation then proves altogether favourable as establishing the reliability of the Evangelists, *i.e.* the editors of the Gospels as we have them. The question at present is not "what is the value of their sources?" but "how have they treated those sources?" Have they manipulated them in such a way as to leave us several degrees further removed from historical fact? Even taking a text, as Harnack practically does, from which all possible traces of

[1] Dr. Moulton (*Cambridge Biblical Essays*) suggests that a study of the papyri would somewhat modify this conclusion. "Compounds" are not necessarily literary, and Matthew sometimes has the more classical word, leaving Luke (and Q) with the Hellenistic, or popular, phrase (pp. 480, 485 ff., 496).

harmonising have been relentlessly expunged, and assuming for the moment that all variations are due to the Evangelists and not to their sources, or to the actual repetition of similar sayings on different occasions, it appears that both have treated their source with a high degree of fidelity. The majority of their assumed alterations are unimportant, being, in fact, little more than verbal; very seldom do they allow themselves to tamper with the sense. With regard to the first group of passages in particular, it is not too much to say that, roughly speaking, the text in St. Matthew and in St. Luke is identical (p. 32).

The important point is that this conclusion is valid, apart from any theory of the nature of Q, or of the form in which the material came to the final editors. The variations which have so far been attributed to them may, in fact, go further back, as Harnack admits in some cases. They may be supposed to have arisen in the course of oral tradition, in different versions of an original Aramaic collection, or in a hundred other ways. That will not affect the conclusion that as a whole *the variations themselves are unimportant*, and easily explained; we can go behind them with a high degree of probability and reach a stage perhaps very near to the original.

We pass now to the question of "Q," the supposed common source. The variations in the text of St. Matthew are sufficient to forbid the idea that St. Luke used his Gospel (p. 78). On the other hand, the resemblances in the first group of parallel sections prove that "in the parts we are concerned with the connection between the two Evangelists (neither of whom was the source of the other) must be *literary*; *i.e.* it is not enough to go back to common oral sources" (p. 32). In particular, oral tradition is not enough to explain the phenomena of the Sermon on the Mount (p. 80 n.). The conclusion is that "one and the same Greek translation of an Aramaic original lies behind the two Gospels" (p. 80). As to the supposed traces of differences of translation from this Aramaic, Harnack is not nearly so certain as Wellhausen and Nestle. He admits that the actual copies of Q used by St. Matthew and St. Luke may have differed in detail, but finds it hopeless to reconstruct a Q^1 and a Q^2. *E.g.* the editor of the first Gospel may have found the amplification of the "sign of Jonah" in the copy he used, and St. Luke may have taken the "egg and the scorpion" from another version of the saying. "In a few cases we might doubt whether there is any common source underlying Matthew and Luke (Lk $6^{46\ 49}$ 7^{1-10}

$11^{41.44}$ 14^{26})" (p. 80); and with regard to the short sayings in particular, "Matthew and Luke may well have had more than one common source besides Mark" (p. 126). The admission of these possibilities does not prevent Harnack from giving us an interesting reconstruction of Q (pp. 88ff.); needless to say it is hypothetical both in text and in compass. According to this reconstruction, Q included 7 narratives, 12 parables, 13 collections of sayings, and 29 longer or shorter sayings.

Did Q include more? It is *a priori* probable enough that parts of Q may have been utilised by one of the Evangelists alone (as has happened in their reproduction of St. Mark), but have we any criterion by which we can assign to Q matter found in *one Gospel only*? The examination of the material which has so far been supposed to come from Q, fails to disclose any marked peculiarity of style, unless extreme simplicity can be so described. Herein New Testament criticism differs from that of the Old Testament; in the Hexateuch the style, *e.g.*, of P enables us to trace it with a high degree of certainty. With regard to Q, the double version is practically our only criterion, hence the conclusion is that there is practically nothing peculiar to the first or third Gospel which can *definitely* be assigned to Q (p. 130).

The question is particularly important with regard to the *Passion Narrative*. As is well known, St. Matthew and St. Luke practically never agree against St. Mark in this; our one certain criterion accordingly fails us. Is there any ground for supposing that either, in particular St. Luke, used Q? *Did Q include a Passion narrative at all?* Probably not. If it did so, why should either of the Evangelists desert it at the critical point, when they have both used it so freely before? Further, a glance at any list of the passages common to the two Gospels will show that, except for Mt 23. 24, the common source is hardly used by either in the latter half of their Gospels. The conclusion can hardly be resisted that they must have exhausted all it had to give them in the course of their earlier chapters (p. 120).

A similar "not proven" must be the verdict with regard to the *supposed traces of Q outside the Gospels*. The agrapha of other books of the New Testament, of MSS, and of the Fathers, or versions of Christ's sayings in the Fathers which do not seem to rest directly on our Canonical Gospels, have been ascribed to Q. In particular, Clemens Romanus and Polycarp have been supposed to quote from a definite collection of *Λόγοι τοῦ κυρίου* (cf. Ac 20^{35}), which has further been identified with Q or the

Logia. The hypothesis is a tempting one, but if we follow Harnack, it must be resisted. "The burden of proof in each case rests on those who support the claims of Q, but we look in vain for real proofs in the pages of Resch and others" (p. 135).[1]

So much with regard to the contents of Q; can we arrive at any conclusions as to the *order* in which its contents stood? The apparently hopeless divergences of their arrangement in our Gospels have usually been a stumbling-

[1] It is of interest to compare Harnack's view with one of the latest considerable investigations of the subject in England, Mr. Allen's *Commentary on St. Matthew*. At first sight the divergence seems great, and is discouraging to those who are hoping for assured results in the investigation of the Synoptic problem. It would be impertinent for the amateur to attempt to decide between the two, but it may be permissible to point out that on looking closer the difference tends to diminish. Mr. Allen's view is conditioned by his stress on the divergences between St. Matthew and St. Luke; Harnack fastens on the resemblances. Mr. Allen turns the edge of the latter by keeping before him the possibility that St. Luke may have seen the first Gospel, though not writing with it before him. His Q consists of the Judaic sayings peculiar to St. Matthew, together with some of the sayings which are found also in St. Luke. The common narrative portions he assigns to X; *i.e.* Harnack's Q = part of Allen's Q + X. It will be remembered that Harnack does not deny that some of the matter peculiar to St. Matthew may have stood in Q; he merely refrains from saying so in any definite case. And while Mr. Allen holds that the two Evangelists had very rarely a common written source, he admits that much of the common matter may go back to one source ultimately, reaching St. Luke at a later stage. See, further, an article by Mr. Allen, *Expository Times*, xx. pp. 445 ff.

block to the would-be believer in the reality of a common source, but Harnack makes a bold attempt to bring order out of this seeming chaos. In fact, an unobtrusive note on p. 125 tells us that it was the similar order of the sections in St. Matthew and St. Luke which conquered his own long-continued scepticism as to the existence of such a source as Q. The investigation is complicated (pp. 121 ff.), and it is impossible to do justice to it without elaborate tables. The result may be summed up as follows. St. Luke's first 13 sections are reproduced in St. Matthew in practically the same order though interspersed with sayings found later in St. Luke (= St. Matthew's Sermon on the Mount). The material in Mt 8–10 is found in nearly the same order in St. Luke, but it is scattered over a larger number of chapters. Generally speaking, the order of the important sections in Q is identical in both Gospels, the main exceptions being the message of the Baptist, and the division by St. Luke of Mt 23, 24. The other differences of order are usually confined to short logia or to passages which on other grounds may not belong to Q. Harnack takes the view that St. Matthew's order is more primitive, and that his "conflations" had their basis in the source; he supposes that even in the Sermon the common matter stood together in Q, as we

find it in St. Matthew, and that it was deliberately displaced by St. Luke. This, of course, is not the prevalent view, and in face of St. Matthew's disturbance of St. Mark's order in the first half of his gospel, it is doubtful. But, again, the main conclusion is unaffected. Whatever be the explanation of the differences, we can reconstruct the order of the common source in its outline. It commenced with the Baptism and Temptation, followed by a large number of discourses in a more or less probable, though, it is true, not a very significant order, and concluded with final warnings and eschatological matter.

What, then, was the character of Q? It was mainly a collection of sayings of the Lord. It is true it included a small proportion of narratives, but their presence may be easily accounted for (p. 127, n. 2). The Baptism and Temptation define at the very beginning the person of Jesus and His Messianic character, which is henceforth assumed. Incidents such as John's message to Christ, the questions of the aspirants, the casting out of a devil, and the demand for a sign, are in each case subordinate to the teaching of which they were the occasion. The healing of the centurion's servant has always been a difficulty to those who regard the source as *Logia* in the usual sense. Harnack suggests

that the point was not the healing in itself, which, indeed, may not have been mentioned in Q, but the faith of the heathen and the lessons drawn from it (p. 146).

As we have seen, Q probably did not include a Passion narrative, the climax and, in a sense, the *raison d'être* of the Gospels as we have them;[1] *i.e.* "Q was not a Gospel at all as they were" (p. 120). It was rather a collection of sayings drawn up for catechetical purposes. Such a collection is *a priori* probable, both on account of Jewish ways of thought, and from the actual stress which early Christians laid on the "words of the Lord" (pp. 127, 159). It had a method, but the principle of its arrangement was not chronological; *e.g.* the position of the Sermon is probably due to the desire for emphasis (p. 142). The style is not very distinctive, the vocabulary being of small compass and simple (see lists on pp. 103–115). In face of the marked features of the Synoptists' style, this does, in fact, give Q a certain distinctive character and unity. So with the contents, the main feature is simplicity. Its Christology is

[1] Harnack finds it necessary to insert a warning (p. 162, n.) against the "folly" (*Unsinn*) of those who would argue on this ground that the Passion never took place! We may add that the "argument from silence" is always precarious; when it bases itself on a document which is hypothetical and fragmentary, it becomes ludicrous.

simple, "Jesus" being the almost invariable title of our Lord, and the teaching is informal and largely ethical. We find none of the "tendencies" which are so characteristic of our Gospels: St. Mark's emphasis on the supernatural, and the Divine Sonship; St. Matthew's interest in the needs of the Church, and apologetic attitude towards Judaism; St. Luke's Hellenic wideness of outlook, presenting Christ as the Healer (p. 118). Its horizon is even more definitely Galilæan than theirs. Harnack follows Schmiedel (and Loisy) in seeing in the often-quoted lament over Jerusalem a continuation of the quotation from the "Wisdom of God."[1]

The same simple and undeveloped attitude appears in Q's relation to Judaism. Palestinian features are prominent; the work of the Baptist

[1] The facts are these. In Mt 23^{34} the lament over Jerusalem follows immediately on the saying about the blood of the prophets. In Lk 11^{49} this is introduced by the words, "Therefore the wisdom of God said" (? a quotation from an unknown source); the lament follows in a different context in 13^{34}. The suggestion is that the first Gospel has preserved the true connection of the passages, and the third Gospel the fact of the quotation, which may then cover the lament as well. The point is that in this case the reference to unknown visits to Jerusalem is weakened; our Lord may be applying the quotation to Jerusalem's long continued rejection of God's love. Harnack, however, still thinks that the words gain in impressiveness if they were actually spoken in Jerusalem. (Cf. Loisy, *Le Quatrième Évangile*, p. 63.)

is strongly emphasised. There is a clearly marked opposition to "the evil and adulterous generation" of the day, but no anti-Judaic polemic or apologetic, or criticism of the law (p. 160).[1]

Arguing from these marks of primitive simplicity, Harnack draws the important conclusion that Q is prior to St. Mark. St. Mark's few points of contact with Q are not enough to establish a direct connection; he probably knew *some* collection of sayings, and a double tradition is in itself probable. Those who have maintained, as Wellhausen does, the priority of the second Gospel, have done so because they

[1] One can feel a difference in the supposed standpoints of Q and of the editor of the first Gospel. But both wrote from a Judaic point of view, and it becomes in some cases a very delicate task to divide rightly between them the admitted Judaic material of the first Gospel. *E.g.*, in the Lord's Prayer, Harnack refuses to Q the first three petitions as well as the last. He attributes them to the primitive Jewish Christian community assimilating the prayer to the synagogue forms, or to the editor himself (p. 40). But admitting the "Jewish horizon" of Q, are they not equally intelligible there, and may not Q here, as elsewhere, be supposed to take us very near to the Lord's own words? The same question arises with regard to the teaching about Righteousness in Mt 6 (pp. 117, 128).

As we have had occasion to criticise the somewhat truncated version of the Lord's Prayer, which is all that Harnack allows to come from Q, *i.e.* to be original, it may be well to add that he makes no question that some such form was actually given by Christ. "I doubt whether a prophet or teacher of the East ever gave injunctions to prayer, without also giving a pattern prayer" (p. 145).

have ascribed to Q the secondary traits of St. Matthew and St. Luke (p. 136). The detailed examination of the second Gospel and Q, in which Harnack suggests that St. Mark is secondary throughout and marks a later stage, is perhaps not very convincing. Once more we try to disentangle the important point, which is the absence of any real contradiction between the two. The suggestion on p. 159 is worthy of note; Q could not have arisen after St. Mark had fixed the Gospel type, in which he was followed by all subsequent writers, canonical and uncanonical alike. "Q stands midway between a formless collection of the sayings of Jesus, and the Gospels as fixed in writing." We have, in fact, in Q and St. Mark the true "double tradition," to which St. Luke may perhaps refer in Ac 1[1]. "Our knowledge of the preaching and life of Jesus depends on two sources, of nearly the same date, but independent, at least in their main features. Where they agree their evidence is strong, and they do agree in many and important points. Destructive critical inquiries . . . break themselves in vain against the rock of their united testimony" (p. 172).

It is evident, then, that the investigation is of the highest value from the point of view of the evidence on which our knowledge of Christ's

teaching rests. One knows, indeed, that there is an unwise and a somewhat unfair readiness to quote admissions of a German critic on the orthodox side, apart from their context, and with the omission of qualifications which would be much less readily accepted. Harnack himself has protested against this procedure in his preface to *Lukas der Arzt*. It is then only right to say that his treatment of the Gospel story will not in all respects satisfy the conservative. We cannot help being conscious of the implied assumptions, that whatever has to do with "a Church" is "secondary," and that whatever is "Pauline" or developed is further from the truth than primitive first impressions. As Dr. Sanday has lately put it, "he [Harnack] feels the prevalent *Geist des Verneinens* dragging at his skirts, and has yielded to it more than he ought." What Mr. Allen has said on this subject is entirely to the point.[1] "The historian . . . will shrink from the conclusion that . . . the teaching of Christ was *altogether* and *exclusively* what the editor of the first Gospel represents it to have been, to the exclusion of representations of it to be found in other parts of the New Testament. . . . That teaching was no doubt many-sided. Much of it may have been uttered in the form of para-

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 320.

dox and symbol. The earliest tradition of it, at first oral and then written, was that of a local Church, that of Jerusalem, which drew from the treasure-house of Christ's sayings such utterances as seemed to bear most immediately upon the lives of its members, who were at first all Jews or proselytes. In this process of selection the teaching of Christ was only partially represented, because choice involved over-emphasis. Paradox may sometimes have been interpreted as an expression of literal truth, symbol as reality, and to some extent, though not, I think, to any great extent, the sayings in process of transmission may have received accretions arising out of the necessities of the Palestinian Church life. Thus the representation of Christ's teaching in this Gospel, though early in date, suffers probably from being local in character. In the meantime, much of Christ's teaching remained uncommitted to writing; and not until St. Paul's teaching had made men see that Palestinian Christianity suffered in some respects from a too one-sided representation of Christ's teaching, did they go back to the utterances of Christ, and reinterpret them from a wider point of view; seeking out also other traditions of different aspects of His teaching which had been neglected by the Palestinian guardians of His words." The remarks refer

to the first Gospel, but they apply equally to any attempt to over-emphasise the value of Q to the exclusion of the later teaching of other parts of the New Testament.

Further, Harnack's conclusions as to the scope, use, and the very existence of Q are still admittedly in the region of hypothesis; by the nature of the case such inquiries can rarely rise above a high degree of probability. But one of the objects of this paper is to call attention to his results, as affecting the reliability of the Gospel story, and to suggest that they do not entirely depend on a particular view of Q and its use by our Evangelists, nor need they be rejected on account of a possible overestimate of its value as compared with other writings. We have already seen that his inquiry has made it clear that our varying versions of Christ's words do not show signs of any serious manipulation, whether on the part of our Evangelists or their predecessors. A further conclusion is that we can take the matter common to St. Matthew and St. Luke, call it Q, or what we like, and from it we can construct a picture of our Lord and His teaching, primitive and simple, essentially in harmony with that of St. Mark, and containing the germ of much that was to follow.

We have said that Q's Christology was

simple, yet it is also profoundly significant. The person of Jesus holds throughout the central place in the picture. His Messiahship is emphasised in the opening paragraphs of the Baptism and Temptation, and is henceforth assumed. The absence of proof or attempted argument on this point shows "that this collection was exclusively intended for the Church, and had in mind those who needed no assurance that their teacher was also the Son of God" (p. 163). It included the title "Son of Man," and, above all, the antithesis between "the Father" and "the Son" in the famous passage Mt 11^{25}, Lk 10^{21}. This passage is crucial, with regard both to our Lord's self-consciousness, and to the relations between the Synoptists and St. John; Harnack devotes a long appendix to it. He admits that the canonical wording is "Johannine" (p. 210), but by a careful examination of MS variations, and of the numerous patristic quotations of the passages, he restores what he regards as the original text, as it ran in Q, and probably also in St. Luke. *Ἐξομολογοῦμαί σοι, πάτερ, κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅτι ἔκρυψας ταῦτα ἀπὸ σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν, καὶ ἀπεκάλυψας αὐτὰ νηπίοις· ναὶ, ὁ πατήρ, ὅτι οὕτως ἐγένετο εὐδοκία ἐμπροσθέν σου. πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔγνω τὸν πάτερα* (or *τίς ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ*) *εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς, καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψῃ*

(p. 206).[1] Even so, the Logion is of the first importance critically; it implies that in our oldest source, Jesus spoke of Himself absolutely as "the Son," and regarded Himself as standing in a peculiar relation to His Father. "It is indeed quite inconceivable how he could have arrived at the conviction that He was the future Messiah, without first being conscious of standing in a peculiar relation to God" (p. 209). We find, in fact, the same antithesis in Mk 13^{32} (10^{32} on p. 152 is an obvious misprint), and Harnack suggests that 1 Co $1^{19.\ 21}$ may rest on the passage before us. The continuation in St. Matthew ("Come unto Me," etc.) stands on a different footing; it is not found in St. Luke, and the connection with the context is not immediate. But here, again, Harnack pronounces strongly for its authenticity, mainly on internal evidence. 2 Co 10^{1} may well be an echo of the saying, and the absence of any reference to death or the Cross shows that it must be prior to St. Mark and the development of Paulinism. It may belong to Q, or to some other source (this would explain its otherwise very strange

[1] I thank Thee, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast hid these things from wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for thus it seemed good before Thee. All things are delivered Me by the Father, and no one knoweth the Father (or who the Father is), save the Son and he to whom the Son revealeth Him.

omission by St. Luke); "it cannot be shown that it belongs to a secondary tradition." "The only alternatives are to ascribe it to the later creation of a prophet of the Jewish Christian Church, who strangely disregarded the death upon the Cross, or to Jesus Himself. There seems to me no doubt which alternative we are to adopt" (p. 216).

Again, with regard to the "Sermon on the Mount," Harnack's investigations go to show that it is not a mere compilation. The setting, of course, is different in the two Gospels, but attention is drawn to the fact that both agree in mentioning the presence of the multitude, combined with the fact that the Sermon was addressed to the disciples (p. 122, n.). This points to a real tradition as to its occasion. It is true the Beatitudes speak of persecutions, and persecutions did, in fact, take place afterwards. But that does not prove that the saying was a product of a later age, coloured by the facts. Harnack has some cutting remarks on the folly of regarding everything as an "anachronism" or artificial prophecy ("hysteron-proteron"), which does, in fact, fit the circumstances of a subsequent generation (p. 143). "Looked at both in detail, and as a whole, that which is set before us in the Sermon on the Mount as the teaching of Jesus

bears the stamp of unalloyed genuineness. We are astonished that in an age in which Paul was active, and burning questions of apologetic and the law were to the fore, the teaching of Jesus was so well remembered and remained so vital as Moral preaching" (p. 146).

Q, then, has given us the abiding picture of Jesus as revealed in His words. It takes our tradition a stage further back, who shall say how near to the actual occasion on which those words were spoken? It obviously arose in Palestine (p. 172)—on the actual scene of the ministry. And Harnack himself concludes, from the well-known words of Papias, that it was in all probability the work of St. Matthew (p. 172)—an eye-witness and a listener. Allowing for a somewhat different view of the Logia, Harnack would probably endorse the words of Mr. Allen: "They are perhaps the earliest of all our sources of knowledge for the life of Christ, and rest even more directly than does the second Gospel on apostolic testimony. For the Apostle Matthew seems to have written down, for the use of his Palestinian fellow-Christians, some of the sayings of Christ that he could remember, selecting, no doubt, such as would appeal most strongly to his readers and satisfy their needs. Better security

that these sayings were uttered by Christ Himself we could hardly desire."[1]

We may add, in conclusion, two similar pronouncements put side by side by Dr. Sanday in his *Life of Christ in Recent Research*, p. 172. The first is a quotation from Sir W. Ramsay. "The lost common source of Luke and Matthew (*i.e.* Q) . . . was written while Christ was still living. It gives us the view which one of His disciples entertained of Him and His teaching during His lifetime, and may be regarded as authoritative for the view of the disciples generally." The second is from Dr. Salmon's *Human Elements in the Gospels*, p. 274. "The more I study the Gospels the more convinced I am that we have in them contemporaneous history; that is to say, that we have in them the stories told of Jesus immediately after His death, and which had been circulated, and, as I am disposed to believe, put in writing while He was yet alive." These views of the date of Q may indeed be, as Dr. Sanday thinks, somewhat optimistic, but the consensus of opinion as to its value is of good omen to those who are trying to combine the old faith with the new critical methods.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 317.

V

"SHOULD THE MAGNIFICAT BE ASCRIBED TO ELISABETH?"

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It has always been known to textual critics that there is a remarkable variant in Lk 1^{46}, according to which the Magnificat is ascribed to Elisabeth instead of to the Virgin Mary. It is discussed in Westcott and Hort's *Notes on Select Readings*, and has been the subject of various articles in Germany and France, but it has not until latterly attracted much attention in England. The point is not even mentioned in Plummer's *Commentary on St. Luke*, nor does there seem to be any reference to it in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*; certainly there is no article on the subject. It is, however, discussed shortly by Schmiedel in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* (*s.v.* Mary), and at more length by Bishop Wordsworth and Dr. Burkitt in Dr. Burn's *Niceta of Remesiana* (1905). But probably not a few have had their attention first drawn to the point by a passing remark in Harnack's *Lukas der Arzt*

(p. 72, cf. p. 140), and the whole question is treated fully by Loisy in *Les Évangiles Synoptiques* (Introd. p. 265, and Com. i. pp. 302 ff.). The most comprehensive discussion in English would seem to be an exhaustive article by Dr. A. E. Burn in the second volume of the *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* (*s.v.* Magnificat).[1]

It may, then, be of use to put together the facts and the arguments on both sides. Did St. Luke attribute the Magnificat to Mary or Elisabeth? The question is of importance from its bearing on the validity of the generally received critical text of the New Testament, and it also has a sentimental side, which will not be ignored by those who are in the habit of using the hymn in public worship.

1. *The Evidence for the Reading.* In the introduction to the Magnificat in Lk 1^{46} all our MSS, Greek and Latin, read *καὶ εἶπεν Μαριάμ* ("and Mary said"), except three Old Latin MSS (*a*, *b*, and *l*[2]), which have *Elisabeth*. These three form, according to Burkitt, "a typical European group"; *i.e.* they tend to be found in agreement, and their combined evidence should be regarded as single rather than threefold. All other Versions have the ordinary

[1] And more briefly in Hastings' one-vol. *DB*.
[2] Sometimes quoted as *rhe*.

reading, as have the Fathers, except Irenæus, Origen, and Niceta. Some doubt, however, attaches to the evidence of the first two. In the passage in question from Irenæus (*Hær.* iv. 7. 1), *Elisabeth* is read by two MSS, while a third has *Maria*, and in iii. 10. 2 Irenæus unquestionably attributes the Magnificat to Mary; hence Burn and Loisy agree that in the former passage the reading *Elisabeth* is probably due to his translator or to a copyist. The reference in Origen is by way of a note on the reading,[1] and critics are divided as to whether it is to be attributed to him or to his translator Jerome; but in either case it is important additional evidence of the existence of the reading *Elisabeth* in St. Luke. With regard to Niceta there is no doubt. Twice over he speaks of Elisabeth as the author of the Magnificat, and in one case adds the epithet "diu sterilis." He lived at the close of the fourth century, and in his quotations represents generally the Latin Bible just before Jerome's revision. He uses a type of text "not very much unlike *b*" (one of the MSS which has the variant), and therefore "does not add very

[1] *In Luc. hom.* vii.: "Invenitur beata Maria, sicut in aliquantis exemplaribus reperimus, prophetare. Non enim ignoramus quod secundum alios codices et hæc verba Elisabeth vaticinetur. Spiritu itaque sancto tunc repleta est Maria."

much to the weight of evidence for the ascription to Elisabeth, except in so far as he shows that the tradition was more widespread and persistent at the end of the fourth century than we might otherwise have supposed."[1] It is noticeable, too, that as a liturgiologist (he is supposed to have been the author of the Te Deum) he saw nothing incongruous in attributing the hymn to Elisabeth.

It is obvious, then, that the textual evidence for the new reading is very slight, but it would be wrong to brush it aside at once. There are two considerations to be borne in mind: (*a*) The type of text associated with the names of Westcott and Hort no longer has the field to itself. Textual critics are giving increasing weight to much of what is known as the "Western" text; in particular, it is held that the Old Latin and Syriac often preserve readings current in the second century, the fact being that the text of the Gospels may well have been for some time in a fluid state. The question is still *sub judice*, and must be left to the experts. Probably most of us feel a prejudice in favour of the Westcott and Hort type, as at least giving us a fixed basis on which to work. And we are at any rate justified in our present state of knowledge in hesitating before we

[1] Burkitt in Burn, *op. cit.* p. cliii.

accept a reading which has *no* Greek evidence in its favour. There is, indeed, no case where critics have done so with any unanimity. It is at the same time of great importance to realise that the text of the New Testament cannot by any means be regarded as finally fixed, and that we may be called upon to revise our views on the subject.[1]

(*b*) In the case before us the nature of the variant forbids our rejecting it at once. It seems to be too widely spread to be ascribed to a slip of the pen,[2] and it is obviously improbable that *Elisabeth* should ever have been substituted for *Mary*, whilst the reverse is possible enough.[3] On the other hand, the

[1] Mt 1^{16} may serve as an example of the type of case in which there is an increasing agreement among critics that no Greek MS preserves the original reading; but there the evidence of corruption is far greater than in the case we are considering.

[2] Nestle, however (*Introd. NT. Crit.* p. 238), apparently considers the variant to be due to mere carelessness.

[3] We may note that *b* plays a somewhat prominent part in the important readings connected with the Virgin Birth. But, unfortunately, the tendency of its variants is so divided that it is hard to discover any bias on the part of the scribe. On the one hand, we have this variant "Elisabeth," which *might* be due to a desire to depreciate the position of Mary. Similarly in Mk 6^{3} *b* reads "son of the Carpenter" instead of "Carpenter" (cf. Mt 13^{55} and Lk 4^{22}); in Lk 2^{5} it has "wife" instead of "fiancée," and in Mt 1^{16} an apparently intermediate reading with *genuit*, whilst in vv.$^{19.\ 20.\ 24}$ it does not share the variations of Syr^{Cur}, which emphasise the Virgin Birth.

evidence for *Mary* is far too strong (including, *e.g.*, Tertullian), and that for *Elisabeth* too weak, to allow us to suppose the latter to have been the original reading. The conclusion of the majority of recent critics is that the real reading is καὶ εἶπεν ("and she said"), from which the variants were derived by way of gloss. Whilst by no means accepting this view as final, for the reasons stated under (*a*), we may adopt it as a provisional hypothesis. A further question at once arises. If there was originally no name, which gloss is right? Burn and Wordsworth say "Mary," Burkitt, Harnack, Loisy, Schmiedel, etc., "Elisabeth." The question can only be answered on internal and grammatical considerations.

2. *Grammatical Considerations.* (*a*) It is said that καὶ εἶπεν standing alone must refer to Elisabeth as the last speaker. This is more than doubtful. Mary is the prominent

Most striking of all, in Lk 1^{34} it stands alone in substituting for "How shall this be?" etc., the words of v.^{38}, "Behold the handmaid," etc. From these instances one might be tempted to suppose in this MS some hesitation with regard to the Virgin Birth. But in other cases we have variations with an exactly opposite tendency. In Lk $2^{33.\ 41}$ it substitutes "Joseph" for "father" or "parent," and in particular in Jn 1^{13} it is the only MS which has preserved the reading "qui . . . natus est," a reading which, *pace* Loisy (*Qu^me Év.* p. 180), seems to imply the miraculous conception. The phenomena, then, are too contradictory to allow of our ascribing any uniform bias to the MS in question.

figure, and usage is not decisive as to whether the phrase may or may not be used when the speaker changes. Wordsworth[1] finds it in accordance with Hebraic and Septuagint idiom to omit the name of the fresh speaker in such a case. Probably most readers reading the paragraph as a whole will feel that it is impossible to pronounce decisively for either speaker on these grounds.

(*b*) If the introduction is inconclusive, can we gain a clearer light from the subscription? The Magnificat is followed by the words, "And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her house." *Prima facie* these words undoubtedly suggest that Elisabeth and not Mary has been the speaker in the preceding verses; and yet this conclusion is by no means certain, the repetition of Mary's name after so many verses being entirely natural, and serving to mark the whole section as a "Mary section." We can, however, go further than this. It has not been sufficiently emphasised that the verse looks forward at least as much as back; it connects with v.[57], "Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered," and this has decided the form of the preceding sentence. It would have

[1] In Burn's *Niceta*, p. clvi.

been awkward to say, ἔμεινεν δὲ σὺν Ἐλεισάβετ . . . ("she remained with E.") τῇ δὲ Ἐλεισάβετ ἐπλήσθη ("and E.'s full time came"), while ἐπλήσθη δὲ αὐτῇ would have been ambiguous. Taking the verses together, the "Mary" at the beginning of the first marks the close of the "Mary section," and is answered by the "Elisabeth" at the beginning of the second, marking the commencement of an "Elisabeth section." The verses have, in fact, received the best literary form possible, and contain nothing incompatible with the ascription of the Magnificat to the Virgin. At the same time, the fact that the grammar is superficially in favour of "Elisabeth" may have been the cause, as Westcott and Hort suggest, of the substitution of her name for Mary's in v.[46].

3. *Internal Evidence.* (*a*) It is quite obvious that a main source of the Magnificat was Hannah's song in 1 S 2, and it is equally obvious that whatever the real origin of that song (it is not as a whole appropriate to Hannah's situation, and has been supposed to be the song of a warrior), St. Luke, Mary, or Elisabeth would all believe it to be hers without question. The resemblance between the two has furnished a strong argument in favour of the ascription

of the Christian hymn to Elisabeth. Hannah's song of praise is inspired by the fact that Jehovah has removed from her the reproach of childlessness; the parallel is with the situation of Elisabeth, not with that of Mary. True, but no critic seems to have pointed out that *the only words in Hannah's song which are really appropriate to Elisabeth are entirely unrepresented in the Magnificat.* These are v.[5b], "Yea, the barren hath borne seven, and she that hath many children languisheth." Surely these words, even if not literally applicable, must have found an echo in the Magnificat, if it had been by Elisabeth, the more so as the first half of this very verse is fully represented ("They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry have ceased"). The omission is almost inexplicable if the Magnificat is attributed to Elisabeth, whilst it is perfectly natural under the ordinary view; the words were quite inappropriate in Mary's mouth.

(*b*) With regard to the language of the Magnificat itself, the most distinctive verse is v.[48]. The opening words ("For He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden"), though true of Elisabeth, ταπείνωσις being used of the reproach of childlessness

(cf. 1 S 1[11]), recall Mary's "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (v.[38]). It may be true that the second half of the verse ("For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed"), if divested of the fullness of meaning which Christians have found in it, is, as Loisy maintains, possible in the mouth of Elisabeth[1] (cf. Leah in Gn 30[13]). But there is no question that it is far more appropriate to the mother of the Messiah, and is the natural answer to Elisabeth's "Blessed art thou among women" (v.[42]), and "Blessed is she that believed" (v.[45]).

(*c*) Passing to the general situation, we are told that the Magnificat regarded as the utterance of Elisabeth is in exact correspondence with the Benedictus as spoken by her husband Zacharias, when he too is filled with the Holy Ghost (v.[67], cf. v.[41]). But in the latter hymn the central thought is the coming of the Messiah of whom the child is the forerunner. If, however, the Magnificat belongs to Elisabeth, it is her own personal happiness and exultation which becomes a main theme and the occasion of the song. The emphasis laid on her own joy in vv.[46–49] is quite out of keeping with the subordinate

[1] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, i. p. 305.

position which she assumes in vv.[11-13]. There can, indeed, be no doubt that Mary is intended to be the real centre of the picture; if she is deprived of the Magnificat, she is left on this occasion absolutely silent. Burkitt suggests that the "*Λόγος ἀπὸ σιγῆς προελθών* more corresponds to the fitness of things than a burst of premature song."[1] It is not, however, very obvious why the song should be more "premature" as spoken by Mary than by Elisabeth, and the mystic fitness seen in her supposed silence is perhaps a little subtle. It is natural that she should reply to Elisabeth's salutation, and it seems something of a "modernism" to suppose that a first century writer would have seen a profounder significance in her not doing so.

Our conclusion, then, is that we need have little hesitation in believing the ordinary view to be correct. It is by no means certain that the accepted reading is wrong; and even if we assume an original *καὶ εἶπεν*, it will still remain probable that St. Luke intended Mary to be understood as the speaker of the Magnificat.

This last phrase has been deliberate. Nothing that has been said touches the question of the real authorship and ultimate

[1] *Op. cit.* p. cliv.

origin of the hymn. We have been dealing with a question of "Lower Criticism." What did the author of the third Gospel actually write, and what did he mean to be understood by his words? The further and more important question belongs to the "Higher Criticism." Who really wrote the Magnificat? Is it a free composition of St. Luke himself? Or is it a Jewish hymn which he found in some source and adapted for his purpose? Or does it really rest upon words spoken by Mary on this or a later occasion? The question is part of the wider problem of the nature and origin of the first two chapters of Luke, and lies beyond the purpose of the present article. But one remark may be allowed. As has been often pointed out, the character of the Canticles is strongly in favour of their substantial authenticity. On the one hand, the vagueness of the language and the lack of definite prediction suggest that they were not deliberately composed at a later date to fit the supposed circumstances; it would have required but little ingenuity to write something which, superficially at least, would have been far more appropriate. On the other hand, they do reflect in a marvellous way the general hopes and the temper of the circle from which they claim

to have sprung. Dr. Sanday[1] has called attention to "the extraordinary extent to which these chapters hit the attitude of expectancy which existed before the public appearance of Christ. It is not only expectation, and tense expectation, but expectation that is essentially Jewish in its character." It is hard to believe that either St. Luke, or any other Christian poet, could have had the dramatic genius, for it required no less, to think himself back so completely into the temper and circumstances of a very peculiar and very brief period of transition, unless he had considerable and authentic materials to guide him. The argument may not be decisive, but it must at least be taken into account in any solution of the problem of these two chapters which is to claim to be final.

[1] *The Life of Christ in Recent Research*, p. 165.

VI

GALATIANS THE EARLIEST OF THE PAULINE EPISTLES

VI.

GALATIANS THE EARLIEST OF THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

This article is only meant for those who accept the "South Galatian" theory, and believe that "the Churches of Galatia" to whom St. Paul wrote were the Churches of Antioch, Iconium, etc., founded on his first missionary journey. The arguments in support of this view are best found in Sir W. Ramsay's well-known books, and need not be repeated here. Those who are still unconvinced, if they think it worth while to read what follows, will presumably do so only in order to amuse themselves with yet another of the extravagances to which that theory leads its adherents.

Further, our argument will rest on the view that the visit to Jerusalem of Gal 2 is *not* that for the Council in Ac 15. A few words must be said in support of this position. If the identification is insisted on, the account either of St. Paul or of St. Luke must be abandoned as unhistorical. With all due respect for the

ingenious pleading of Lightfoot and others, there is no escape from this conclusion; and presumably it is St. Luke's credit that must suffer, since he cannot in this connection be considered an eye-witness. This means that the whole of Ac 15 must be thrown to the wolves as a comparatively late fiction intended to reconcile the two sections of the Church. It is hardly necessary to labour the point that such a view seriously discredits the credibility of the rest of the Acts, a result which will hardly be readily acquiesced in at a time when the current of critical opinion, under Harnack's influence, is setting so strongly in its favour. But the conclusion can only be disputed with success, if the premise is abandoned. Let us then look at the premise a little more closely. There are two cogent reasons why Gal 2 and Ac 15 should not be regarded as referring to the same event. (1) If they are identified, St. Paul ignores the visit of Ac 11. As we shall see, this visit was probably by no means so unimportant as is sometimes maintained. Even if it were, it was surely impossible for Paul to ignore it, and so quite gratuitously give an occasion to his opponents of which they would readily avail themselves. If it *was* of no consequence for his argument, it only needed a parenthesis of a few words to avoid all possibility of misunderstand-

ing—and St. Paul is not afraid of parentheses. (2) The accounts in the two chapters simply do not tally. To talk about the private personal view as opposed to the public official account is not to the point. No one could imagine for a moment that Gal 2 referred to a formal council of the Church at which the very point for which St. Paul was contending had been definitely and deliberately conceded. If this was the case, why in the world did he not say so clearly? Of this more later on; for the argument carries us further than the mere refusal to identify Gal 2 and Ac 15. But at least as against that identification, it is surely sufficient and decisive.

Critics have, of course, suggested various solutions of these difficulties, such as the rejection of the visit of Ac 11 as unhistorical, or the elaborate reconstruction of the whole chronology of St. Paul's life which is associated with the name of Clemen. We need not stop to discuss these views; they are destructive of the credit of Acts, and become superfluous, if we can adopt the obvious solution, which is to identify the visits of Gal 2 and Ac 11. It will probably be generally admitted that Ramsay has disposed of the chronological objection to this view. A glance at the varying tables of dates drawn up by scholars for the life of St. Paul shows at once how uncertain

they are. But, at any rate, there is no great difficulty in finding room for the "fourteen years" which our theory requires between the conversion of the Apostle and his second visit to Jerusalem. It will hardly be denied that the theory itself is natural enough. As we read the Epistle our first impression is that the writer is in fact describing his *second* visit to Jerusalem. A study of the context deepens the impression that if he has omitted any visit, however unimportant, he has been guilty of a most unfortunate error of judgment, if of nothing worse. When, however, we turn to Ac 11 we find good grounds for maintaining that the visit there related was by no means "unimportant" in its bearing on the future work of the Apostle of the Gentiles. The circumstances which led up to it were these. Unofficial missionaries had begun to convert "Greeks"[1] at Antioch (Ac 11^{20}). Barnabas is at once despatched by the Jerusalem Church

[1] There is, of course, the important variant Ἑλληνιστάς, ("Grecians"), which is adopted by WH. and RVm. Ramsay (*St. Paul*, p. 24) mentions this as one of the two cases in Acts where it is impossible to follow WH.; and curiously enough Mr. Valentine-Richards, in *Camb. Biblical Essays*, p. 532, also instances it as one of their mistakes. Ἕλληνάς is adopted by Tisch., Treg., Blass, Harnack, etc., and is absolutely required by the context. After Ac 6, to say nothing of other passages, it is impossible that preaching to *Hellenists* could have been mentioned as a new and significant departure.

as a man of tact and sympathy to deal with a delicate situation, and presumably in due course to report to the Mother Church on this very question of the relations between Jews and Gentiles. During his stay at Antioch, he fetches Saul, and on the occasion of the famine the two return to Jerusalem ("by revelation," Gal 2^2; in consequence of the prophecy of Agabus, Ac 11^{27}).[1] It was inevitable that the representatives of the Apostles (it is, of course, a pure hypothesis of the harmonisers of Ac 15 and Gal 2 that there were none at Jerusalem at this time) should seize the opportunity of discussing the new departure at Antioch. Barnabas was their commissioner, and they were awaiting his report; Paul is now associated with him in his work. It is quite in Luke's manner to leave it to his reader to assume that such a report was made, and we turn to Galatians for the details of the interview. The question of the admission of Gentiles is, as we have seen, already to the fore; the Apostles admit the principle, though no conditions are laid down, except the continuance of assistance to the poor of the Mother Church, "which very thing," says Paul, "I was also

[1] Titus is not mentioned either in Ac 11 or 15, or indeed anywhere in the book; therefore the omission of his name in Ac 11, as compared with Gal 2, raises no *special* difficulty.

zealous to do"; it was, of course, one main reason of this very visit to Jerusalem. Returning to the narrative of Acts, we understand at once on this view the events of 12^{25}–13, which follow immediately after the parenthesis of ch. 12. The first missionary journey may be regarded from one point of view as due to a revelation vouchsafed to the Church at Antioch; from another, it is the direct result of a policy already sanctioned by the Apostles.

It is surely one of the curiosities of Biblical exegesis that orthodox scholars should have created an entirely unnecessary difficulty by continuing to reject this identification. Even before the reign of the "South Galatian theory" it was open to them to make it, as, *e.g.*, Calvin made it. But the purpose of this article is to suggest that while this view solves some of the difficulties connected with the Epistle, it does not go far enough. It does not explain why the Council is not referred to in Galatians, assuming that the letter was written after it had taken place. It is quite true that no mention of it may have been necessary for the purposes of the autobiographical sketch with which the Epistle opens, but some reference to its decision was absolutely called for by the argument of the remaining chapters. On what grounds can it possibly have been passed over?

It has been suggested that its conclusions were of the nature of a compromise and uncongenial to St. Paul. Even if this may have been true of the prohibitions, it was not true of the main conclusions. And if it had been, it did not in the least relieve him of the necessity of dealing with them. For if *ex hypothesi* Paul could not quote them on his side, his opponents must have been quoting them on theirs (they could not have been ignored by *both* parties), and he was bound to reply to their arguments unless he was prepared to throw over the authority of the Jerusalem Church. If, on the other hand, as is far more probable, the decisions were in St. Paul's favour, why should he neglect so strong a support? To say that they were local and temporary is only partially true and completely irrelevant. They were *local*—intended for the very places in which the trouble had recently arisen, and *temporary*—applying to the very period at which Paul was writing. The suggestion may explain why they are not applicable to England in the twentieth century; it does not in the least explain why they should not have been applicable to Galatia in the middle of the first; Ac 16[4] is decisive on the point.[1] And after all,

[1] "Delivered them [the churches of S. Galatia] the decrees for to keep."

the main outcome of the Council lay in the recognition of the fact that circumcision was no longer necessary. This was neither local nor temporary, but a principle of permanent importance, and what is more, the very principle for which St. Paul was contending in the Epistle.

Let us realise the situation. Galatians is not like Romans, a more or less academic treatise, justifying an already existing state of affairs, and working out its implications; it is a religious pamphlet, issued red-hot in the midst of a burning controversy, and in view of a pressing danger. The Judaisers are active with their pestilential teaching; the infection is spreading rapidly in the newly-founded Churches, and must be checked by every possible means. St. Paul would intervene in person if he could, but he cannot, and has to content himself with a letter. He is bound under the circumstances to use every legitimate argument he can think of. Is it conceivable that if he can point to a formal decision of the Church conceding that circumcision is unnecessary for Gentiles he should refrain from doing so? We need not further labour the point that his account of the private arrangement between himself and the Apostles is not an adequate representation of such a formal decision.

We may easily suppose a parallel case. Let

us assume that the use of the Athanasian Creed in the services of the Anglican Church has at length been abolished. A Bishop writes to an Incumbent urging its discontinuance. He brings forward the familiar arguments against the Creed, and forgets to remind his correspondent that Parliament and Convocation have now sanctioned its disuse, and that the law of the Church is now on his side. He would be omitting what for practical purposes is the crux of the matter.

The usual solution of the difficulty is to say that after the Council the Jewish party still held that circumcision was necessary to a *perfect* Christianity. An uncircumcised man might be a Christian "in a sense," but he only became a full Christian when he had submitted to circumcision, much as in later times the monk or religious was supposed to follow Christ in a higher sense than the Christian who remained in the world. The position after the Council may or may not have taken this form; the unfortunate thing is that there is not a hint of it in Galatians. If the argument of the Judaisers had been, "We admit circumcision is not necessary, but it makes a man a better Christian," this must have come out clearly in St. Paul's reply. What he in fact deals with is the necessity of circumcision *per se*, and he never

once refers to the perfectly clear official pronouncement on the subject, which is supposed to have been made in his presence at his own instigation a year or two before. In such a case, the "argument from silence" is valid and conclusive. No such pronouncement can yet have been made.

Accordingly, we maintain that the Epistle to the Galatians must have been written before the events of Ac 15^{3}. There is no difficulty in finding a place for it. It obviously belongs to the period covered by Ac $15^{1.2}$. Judaisers claiming the sanction of James (15^{24}, Gal 2^{12}) have visited Antioch; it is more probable than not that they should have extended their propaganda to the recently founded Churches of S. Galatia.[1] Remembering the strong Jewish element in Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, we see at once that the soil would be congenial. Paul hears of this at Antioch, but he cannot revisit the Churches, since he is needed where he is, and must soon go to Jerusalem. He writes the letter, bringing forward the arguments which he is using in person at Antioch, and will shortly use at Jerusalem. Peter's defection (Gal $2^{11ff.}$) belongs to the same time. Paul in dealing with it is not raking up a matter of ancient history; he is bound to discuss it

[1] Cf. the "so quickly" of Gal 1^{6}.

since it is an element in the situation, which is no doubt being worked by the Jewish party for all it is worth. And we may note that Peter's change of attitude is at once far more intelligible and less discreditable, if it follows the merely informal interchange of views which took place at St. Paul's second visit, than if it has to be placed after the formal settlement of the question at the Council.

How far, it may be asked, does this view harmonise with the rest of the *data* of Ac 15? At first sight there is a difficulty in the fact that the letter embodying the Council's decision is addressed to the Churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; why not Galatia too, if the trouble had already broken out there? But the omission is equally strange on any view. The Churches of South Galatia are obviously the centre of St. Paul's narrative in v.[12]; the Council unquestionably had them in mind, and whether they had been already "troubled" or not, the settlement was undoubtedly meant to apply to them, at least in its dispensing with the necessity for circumcision (cf. 16[4]). Presumably the controversy is regarded as primarily one between Jerusalem and Antioch; the Churches named are those which looked to Antioch as their centre. In any case the omission cannot be regarded as fatal to the early date of Gala-

tians; it is only part of the difficulty that Luke entirely ignores the Galatian defection, a difficulty which is not peculiar to any particular theory of the date of the Epistle. When we pass to the events which followed the Council, we at once have an explanation of the second missionary journey. When the news of the Galatian defection first reached St. Paul, the pressure of circumstances prevented an immediate visit, as we have already seen; now the way is clear. It is quite true that 15^{33-36} seems at first sight to imply a delay which would be a little inconsistent with this view; surely St. Paul would have paid his visit at the earliest possible moment? Well, perhaps he did; a certain stay at the important centre of Antioch (v.[33]) was probably quite inevitable, and the expressions used in vv.[35. 36] do not imply any long delay, but are intentionally vague, after St. Luke's manner.[1] We must remember, too, that we do not know the results of the Epistle; St. Paul may have heard that the plague had been already stayed. The words of 16^{4} are, at any rate, significant; the position he had taken up in his letter has been triumphantly vindicated, and the settlement of the controversy makes for a strengthening of the Churches.

And may we not on our view find a certain

[1] On these, see Harnack, *Apostelgeschichte*, pp. 37–41.

significance in other features of the second journey? We know both from Acts and 1 Thessalonians that St. Paul was eager to return to Thessalonica after his enforced departure. He was learning from the experience of his first journey. Then he had been eager to open up fresh territory as quickly as possible, but he realises now that he must not leave a newly-founded Church to its own devices too soon; there must not be a repetition in Macedonia of the sort of thing that has happened in Galatia. It is true that circumstances are too strong for him, and in the letters to Thessalonica we see the unspeakable relief in the mind of the Apostle that his converts had in fact remained steadfast, and the exhortations to continue firm recur again and again. Of course these features are perfectly explicable on the ordinary view, but it will not be denied that they are doubly significant if the memory of the Galatian defection lies behind them.

The view, then, that Galatians is the earliest of the Pauline Epistles harmonises so completely with many of the *data* both of the Epistles themselves and of Acts, that it can only be rejected for serious and weighty reasons. It should be noticed that it stood first in Marcion's list, a point which may prove to be of the greatest importance, though I must

leave it to others to develop its significance. But, as we know, the early date has not been widely adopted,[1] and we shall naturally expect to find the objections to it strong and almost invincible. The curious thing is that they are apparently very weak, and it is really a mystery why critics who have taken the comparatively difficult steps involved in the South Galatian theory, and the identification of the visits in Gal 2 and Ac 11, should have refused the far easier step of assigning an early date to the Epistle.

(1) Perhaps the main reason is to be found in the apparent connection between Galatians and Romans. The current division of the Pauline Epistle into four groups is fascinating and convenient, and gives an intelligible picture of the development of the Apostle's thought. We are naturally disinclined to upset this arrangement by placing Galatians before the Thessalonian Epistles. However, for certain purposes the grouping will survive the transposition, and in any case such a theory must follow the facts. It is quite true that there is a fairly close connection in thought and language between Galatians and Romans, but this is

[1] It has been taken by Weber, Bartlet, and others, but I have preferred in this paper to work out the arguments afresh from the facts themselves.

explained by the similarity of subject-matter, and does not in the least imply that they were written at the same time. There is no reason why they should not be separated by the five or six years which is all our theory requires. The one is the sketch hastily drawn up in view of the urgent requirements of the moment; the other is the more considered philosophical development of the same theme. It is "the ripened fruit of the thoughts and struggles of the eventful years by which it had been preceded," and "belongs to the later reflective stage of the controversy."[1] It deals with the intellectual difficulties involved in the apparent rejection of the Jews, rather than with the practical question of whether Christians ought in fact to be circumcised. And to maintain that St. Paul's thought could not have been sufficiently developed by the close of the first journey to write the Epistle to the Galatians, is quite unreasonable. There had been, let us say, seventeen years of meditation and practical work since his conversion, and the relation between Jew and Gentile must have often come before him. He did not deal with the point in the Thessalonian Epistles because there was no need to do so. On any view the controversies of the Council had already been raised before

[1] Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. xxiii.

they were written, and the fact that they do not refer to them does not in the least imply that the writer may not have already done so in another letter to another Church.[1]

(2) A further difficulty is found in the two visits, implied in the τὸ πρότερον of Gal 4^{13}. To this it may be replied that we have the high authority of Blass for the view that τὸ πρότερον here means "formerly." Or if this solution is rejected, and we prefer to retain the ordinary translation ("the first time"), we can at once find the two visits in the journeys out and back of Ac 14. The second visit lasted long enough to organise the Churches, and, especially in the case of Antioch and Iconium, could easily be distinguished from the first visit. There unquestionably were two visits on the first journey, and nothing more need be said.

A few words must be added in conclusion on a closely related point. How far is our position affected by the view we take of the text of the Decree in Ac 15? Harnack[2] has lately

[1] I am very glad at the last moment to be able to refer to a remarkable article by Professor Lake in the *Expositor* (Dec. 1910), in which he argues convincingly on textual grounds that Romans originally existed in a shorter recension, and that it was in this form written as a circular letter *at the same time as Galatians, and very possibly before the Council.* This hypothesis would, of course, completely dispose of the objection discussed above.

[2] *Apostelgeschichte*, pp. 188–198.

declared his adherence to the "Western" reading, which omits "and from things strangled." These words are omitted in Dd., Iren., Tert., Cypr., etc., and there are converging lines of evidence which tend to prove they were not in the original text. Their omission carries with it weighty consequences; the Decree no longer deals with ceremonial questions, as is usually supposed, but with moral questions, idolatry, murder, and fornication, the three offences mentioned together in Rev 22^{15}. It would take us too far afield to state the arguments in support of this view; they are convincingly stated in Harnack's pages. If we accept it, as we probably should,[1] several serious difficulties of New Testament criticism vanish at once. We understand, for example, why the Decree is not directly referred to in the Epistles, and particularly in 1 Corinthians, where the eating of things offered to idols is discussed; it was not *ad rem*, since it dealt with the moral offence of idolatry, not with the ceremonial point which troubled the Corinthians. But it does not in the least, as Harnack seems to suggest, solve the difficulties

[1] It must, however, be admitted that Harnack's view has not yet been widely adopted; it has been criticised by Prof. Clemen (*Hibbert Journal*, July 1910), and Dr. Sanday (*Theologische Studien Theodor Zahn dargebracht*, pp. 317 ff.).

associated with the ordinary view of Galatians. It rather accentuates them. For, as we have seen, the problem is not to explain why St. Paul does not discuss the prohibitions of the Decree, whether moral or ceremonial, but why he does not emphasise the great concession, the dispensing of circumcision. If, in fact, the whole Decree was concerned with moral questions and contained no concessions made to Jewish prejudices, as is commonly supposed, it becomes a sweeping victory for the Pauline and Gentile party. The silence about it in Galatians becomes more inexplicable than ever; the revised form of the Decree demands the early date for the Epistle, since the mere quotation of it must have been sufficient to silence the Judaisers.

I am glad, however, to have been able to refer to this corrected version of the Decree, since, although it does not solve the particular difficulty we are considering, it is most valuable in other respects. The problems which centre round Galatians and Ac 15 have long been a crux of New Testament criticism. Their complete solution requires four hypotheses: (1) the "South Galatian" theory; (2) the identification of the visits of Gal 2 and Ac 11; (3) the placing of Galatians before the "Council"; (4) the "Western" version of the Decree. Of

these the fourth stands on a somewhat different footing to the rest. The first three are not the desperate resort of "harmonisers," twisting or ignoring facts in order to force an agreement which is not there. They are the *prima facie* natural interpretation of the facts; the *onus probandi* surely lies on those who reject them. Accept them, and each piece of the puzzle falls into its place easily and satisfactorily. The resultant picture does no discredit either to the Apostle or to the historian of Acts.

VII

THE PROBLEM OF THE APOCALYPSE AND ITS BEARING ON THE CONCEPTION OF INSPIRATION

VII.

THE PROBLEM OF THE APOCALYPSE AND ITS BEARING ON THE CONCEPTION OF INSPIRATION.

The Apocalypse is peculiarly a book where we may expect help from a sane and unflinching criticism. Even the educated reader, who does not confine his attention to the familiar passages, but attempts to get some idea of the book as a whole, is completely at a loss as to what he is to make of it. German commentators, such as Bousset, have offered valuable assistance to those who can use it; but now we have in English a series of important books which face the problem to some extent in the light of modern critical methods. Of these the chief are Dr. Swete's *Apocalypse*, Hort's posthumous and incomplete commentary, Mr. C. A. Scott's edition in the *Century Bible*, Sir W. Ramsay's *Letters to the Seven Churches*, and Dr. Porter's very full article in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*. We wait eagerly for the completion of the list by Dr. Charles'

volume in the "International Critical Commentary."

Let us try and look at the book in the light of criticism. Two principles stand out as fundamental to its study. They are not altogether new, but their full significance has only lately been recognised; in their modern application they revolutionise our conception both of its origin and of its interpretation.

(1) The Apocalypse does not stand alone, but is only one example of a special type of literature. This literature has its recognised language and symbolism, its common traditions and beliefs. Its germs are found in Ezekiel and Zechariah;[1] its first representative is the Book of Daniel; it is further developed in such writings as the Book of Enoch, the Secrets of Enoch, the Apocalypse of Baruch, and the Fourth Book of Esdras; its influence is seen in a lesser degree in many other Jewish or semi-Christian works of the period, particularly in the Book of Jubilees, the Assumption of Moses, the Psalms of Solomon, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and the Sibylline Oracles.

The name given is "Apocalyptic," its main

[1] Its presence is becoming increasingly recognised in certain passages of other prophetical books, notably in the later sections of Isaiah.

subject being the Apocalypse or Revelation of the future. We find in it a common stock of ideas. The righteous people of God are oppressed by their enemies, and evil seems to be triumphant. But when it reaches its climax, the "day of the Lord" will come; He will vindicate the right and terribly avenge His servants on their oppressors. The promises of the prophets will at last be realised, and the kingdom of God, or of the Messiah, will be established, whether on earth or in heaven.

And besides its common beliefs, it has its common modes of representation, which seem to have become conventional. The book is issued under the name of some great one of the past. The revelation is made by vision, by angel, with translation to distant scenes. There is a recognised symbolism of mystic numbers and allegorical beasts; a constantly recurring materialistic imagery of fire, storm, and earthquake.

In the case of the Apocalypse of St. John a very large proportion of its language and symbolism is taken directly from the Old Testament, particularly from Daniel (the first Apocalypse), Ezekiel and Zechariah (its precursors), Isaiah and the Psalms. The writer has a vision of the glorified Christ; each of its details is a reminiscence of Ezekiel and

Daniel. He hears from an angel a "taunt song" on the fall of Babylon; in almost every word it goes back to the "taunt songs" of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. His vision of the holy city again rests on the vision of Ezekiel; his picture of its joys is directly inspired by the same prophet and by Isaiah.

These are only a few examples out of many, and the resemblances have, of course, been recognised from the first. The point is that we cannot stop here. The study,[1] in some cases the discovery, of the non-canonical apocalyptic literature just mentioned has emphasised still further the writer's dependence on earlier material. (*a*) In many cases his language and symbolism, when reminiscent of the Old Testament, have not been taken directly from it, but are used with the additional significance which they have received in the later Apocalypses, *e.g.* the eating "of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God" is promised to him that overcomes (2^7, cf. 22^{14}). The history behind this conception is not merely that of the Genesis narrative. In the Book of Enoch we hear of the tree of life

[1] No student will need to be reminded of the debt we owe in this respect to Dr. R. H. Charles. It is interesting to note that in Alford's commentary on the "Revelation" there is no reference at all to this literature.

in the celestial paradise: "its leaves and its flower and its wood wither not for ever . . . and no flesh hath power to touch it till the great judgment, . . . then to the righteous and the holy shall their fruit be given." The idea recurs in 4 Es (there is in paradise fruit wherein is abundance and healing) and in other books; in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs we even find, "He shall give His saints to eat of the tree of life." Again, since the time of Ezekiel, Gog and Magog (Rev 20^{8}) have received a new connotation. Magog is no longer the *land* with which Gog is connected, but both appear continually as the typical enemies of the Messiah. Cf. Jerus. Targum, "In fine extremitatis dierum Gog et Magog et exercitus eorum adscendent Hierosolyma, et per manus regis Messiæ ipsi cadent." In 4 Es 13 we read of the war in the last days of a countless multitude against Messiah, who shall destroy them by fire from His mouth. Similarly, the conception of the "New Jerusalem" does not rest merely on Isaiah and Ezekiel. It had become a commonplace of Jewish apocalyptic hope, *e.g.* Enoch 90^{28} speaks of a New House greater and loftier than the first, "and the Lord of the sheep was in it"; 4 Es 7^{26}, "The bride shall appear, even the city coming forth."

Other ideas which may be paralleled from the Old Testament, but have received greater significance, are the opening of the books, the book of life, beliefs about Satan, the serpent, or Abaddon.

(*b*) Expressions to which no real parallel is found in the Old Testament are seen to rest upon conceptions familiar to apocalyptic thought and contemporary writings. We note that the seer by using the definite article often assumes that his readers will recognise the allusion, *e.g.* in 2^{17} the conqueror is promised his share of "*the* hidden manna"; in 11^{19} the ark of the covenant is seen in the opened sanctuary of heaven. The reference is to the legend of the hiding of the ark by Jeremiah. Cf. 2 Mac 2^{7}, "The place [of its hiding] shall be unknown until God gather the people again together and mercy come; and then shall the Lord disclose these things, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen, and the cloud." The Apocalypse of Baruch has further, "At the selfsame time [of the revelation of Messiah] the treasury of manna will again descend from on high, and they will eat of it in those years."

Again, the conception of the millennium, as a temporary triumph of righteousness before the final consummation, appears in various

forms. In Enoch 90 the eighth and ninth of those "weeks" into which human history is divided are the reign of righteousness, followed by the judgment and "weeks without number for ever." In 4 Es the reign of Messiah on earth is for four hundred years. In the "Secrets of Enoch" the final world-week is one thousand years. The "seven spirits before the throne" (1^4), the seven angels of the presence of 8^2, are paralleled by the "seven first white ones" of Enoch, by the seven angels of the presence of Tob 12^{15}, and the Rabbinical angelology. Thoughts similar to the conception of the souls of the righteous beneath the altar crying for vengeance meet us frequently in Enoch. The waiting till the number of the elect be completed is a Jewish conception. Cf. Baruch, "The storehouses (promptuaria) shall be opened in which was guarded the number of righteous souls"; 4 Es 4^{35}, "Did not the souls of the righteous ask question of these things in their chambers, saying, 'How long shall I hope on this fashion? When cometh the fruit of the threshing time of our reward?' And unto them Jeremiah the archangel gave answer and said, 'Even when the number is fulfilled of them that are like unto you.'"

Again, the "Secrets of Enoch" speaks of

a great sea between the first and second heavens (cf. Rev 4^{9}); of horses walking to the breast in the blood of sinners (Rev 14^{20}). It is impossible here to multiply quotations; it is enough to instance among many similar parallels the conception of the imprisonment of Satan in the abyss, sealed and guarded by an angel who holds the key; the angelology—an angel of the waters, spirits of the winds, the celestial worshippers who sleep not in their praise; the lake of fire which awaits the Devil and his servants, and the "second death."

(*c*) We have to reckon with the probability, amounting in some cases almost to a certainty, that other features to which no full parallel has yet been found were not original or invented for the first time by the writer. In particular we are prepared to find the influence of the folklore of the time.[1] In ch. 12 (the dragon and the woman with child) Gunkel sees the influence of the widespread Babylonian myth of creation—"the victory of Marduk, the god of light, over the chaos-beast Tiâmat, the

[1] The identification of stars and angels found in ch. 1 (the seven stars are the seven angels of the Churches) may point to the influence of the Babylonian idea of seven star-spirits. The personified star of 9^{1} which falls from heaven is a mythological conception found in Enoch. The belief in the power of hidden names and the sealing of the elect can hardly be separated from the popular folklore connected with talismanic formulæ, however purified be the form it assumes.

dragon of the deep." Bousset adds further striking parallels from the story of the birth of Apollo, and the Egyptian myth of Isis and Horus. On this view we explain the obscurities of the picture. They are due to an attempt to adapt the original myth to the story of the birth of Christ. Again, there are the persistent traditions connected with the belief in Antichrist (see Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend*). Traces may be seen in ch. 11 ("The Two Witnesses") and in ch. 13 (the second beast, afterwards identified with the false prophet, deceiving men by his lying wonders, and appearing as a parody of the Lamb, the true Messiah).

How far such episodes are taken from a special written "source" must remain an open question. We explain a good deal by some such supposition, the isolation and peculiar character of some of the pictures, and contradictions between different parts of the book, the existence of "doublets" and repetitions. On the other hand, we must account for the general sense of unity which pervades the whole and the homogeneity of its very peculiar style. Without adopting any "scissors and paste" theory, we may probably assume that the writer at times incorporates some earlier legend, taking it much as he finds it, without

caring to harmonise all its details with the rest of his picture. Dr. Swete admits that the book may "incorporate earlier materials" (Introd. p. c), and in one place (ch. 15^4) he suggests the probability of a Jewish source.

On the general question of the relationship to apocalyptic literature, our conclusion may be less unhesitating. Again, the question of any direct use of the actual books is secondary. Dr. Swete doubts it, and in some cases it is precluded by the fact that the parallels quoted are from books contemporary with or subsequent to St. John. That does not touch the main point. The nature of the resemblances does not as a rule suggest "borrowing" on either side; they prove the existence of a popular tradition, of a current mode of thought to which all apocalyptic writers can appeal. It is perfectly clear that "he shared with the Jewish Apocalyptists the stock of apocalyptic imagery and mystical and eschatological thought which was the common property of the age." The ideas were in the air, they recur continually in the literature of the type; the writer can assume that they will be intelligible to his readers. The book is an Apocalypse among Apocalypses, using their conventional language and symbolism.

(2) Our second principle of criticism can only

be briefly summarised and illustrated. It is that the book was written with direct reference to a peculiar historical situation. It makes no secret of its origin and, unlike other Apocalypses, does not seem to be pseudonymous. The writer had a practical purpose, and that purpose was to strengthen the Churches of his day in view of a crisis which he saw to be imminent. Dr. Swete follows the trend of recent opinion in dating the book in the time of Domitian. If we accept with Dr. Hort the earlier date of the reign of Nero, it will not affect our principle. Whatever there is of direct prediction or of definite historical reference has to do with the situation at the time and the view the seer has been led to take of the probable future of the Roman Empire as he knows it. We may expect to find historical personages and events, more or less disguised or idealised, but always of the writer's own day. And as it is, we see the Roman Empire with its Cæsar worship and names of blasphemy, supported by an interested priestcraft, resting on force and pretended miracles. We hear the rumours of Parthian invasion, and of the dreaded return of Nero (perhaps to the seer's mind reincarnate in Domitian). On the other hand, we see the

struggles and the temptations of the local Churches of Asia, the dangers from within, from the tendency to compromise with the heathen life round them, the persecution already beginning from without, with its boycotting and its death to those who will not worship the beast and his image. The terror will run its course, and in the end Rome will fall attacked by the petty kings of the East or by other of its subject nations.

And after that? Mingled with this view of contemporary history, and in the background, is an eschatology or doctrine of the last things. It is inspiring and full of teaching, but vague and inconsistent with itself directly we attempt to press the details. How are the various catastrophes and falls of Satan to be related to one another? Are they synchronous—different pictures of the same event—or successive steps in the victory? What is the place of the millennium? What of the New Jerusalem and the visions of the closing chapters? No one can say how far we have a realistic picture of what the seer expects will be in heaven, or an idealised picture of what he hopes for on earth. The fact is that in all these things the book does not minister to an idle curiosity to pierce the veil of the future, or to read the secrets of the unseen world. We

can neither sketch the course of history from it nor discover how earth will pass into heaven. It gives us what we need, the assured promise of the victory of Christ and truth, of the eternal blessedness of the faithful with God.

How, then, are we to regard the book? It becomes impossible to see in it a direct and immediate revelation from heaven or a detailed prophecy of the future. It is a literary product; in a sense it may be called artificial. As we have seen, the writer is steeped in the Old Testament and in the apocalyptic traditions of his age. His knowledge of the world and its secrets is gained from a study of the conditions of his own day. To say this is not to deny its originality or its unity of purpose. It is never a mere mosaic, but bears clearly upon it the stamp of a great, of a spiritual, mind. The most cursory comparison with previous and subsequent "revelations" shows its immense superiority, literary, artistic, and spiritual.

Nor does this view deny its value; rather it enhances it. It becomes a real and a living book, written by processes intelligible up to a certain point, and with a clearly defined purpose. It is a positive help to find that its materialistic and almost grotesque imagery was not invented by the seer, still less "revealed"

from heaven. It accounts for the obscurities of the book, and warns us against misleading attempts to find "meanings" in details which were often only conventional to the writer. It helps us to understand the Jewish features; we see why the Christian heaven is described in terms of Jewish thought. We can more easily accept the symbolism of its numbers and its allegorical figures when we see that it was the current language of the time. To us, it may seem forced and unnatural, but at least to the writer and his first readers it was intelligible.

And what of its inspiration? In a word, it is subjective, not objective. It is not a dictation from without, "supernatural" in the objectionable sense, as overriding the normal processes of the reason and the imagination. The Spirit has worked from within the mind of the seer, using the natural means which are at the call of every writer. What right, then, have we to speak of "the Spirit" at all? How do we know that the book is in the deepest sense "true"? Simply because our Christian consciousness recognises it as such. We acknowledge, indeed, that the appeal of its different sections varies enormously. In some the inspiration is at a low level; these are the very parts which as a matter of history have been most abused and have led to the wildest errors.

But in others the appeal finds us at once; and it is no less a matter of history that here, too, our own verdict is verified by the general experience of Christians. We find in it "the notes of insight and foresight," a prophecy in the true sense as interpreting and justifying the ways of God to man; its stern faith is able to evoke our own faith; its vision of God and its hopes for the future find their echo in our own hearts. We believe it to contain the "word of God," because the Divine in us answers to the Divine in the mind of the writer. It is so in Christ's own teaching, His ultimate appeal is to the inherent truth of His words; they are their own evidence that they are the truth and the life, and are recognised as such by all who have not lost the power of seeing the truth, in whom the light that is in them has not turned to darkness.

The bearing of the Apocalypse on the whole question of inspiration is most significant. It is crucial for the view which sees in "revelation" not an external message of God, but an internal process—the Divine in man, the immanent Logos, gradually working itself out and received as true, not on any external authority, but by the weight of its own self-evidence. We may begin by believing the Bible to be true because we are told it is

inspired; we end by believing it to be inspired because we find it, in the sphere of spiritual things, to be true.

There remains, in conclusion, with respect to the Apocalypse itself the further problem, fascinating but insoluble, "What was the actual psychological process in the mind of the seer?" We speak of the book as a literary product, and so in the main it is. But are we to interpret the whole of its language of angels and Christophanies, of trance and of vision, as a mere conventional *façon de parler*? We recognise, on the one hand, that the phenomena of trance have been but little investigated; we are less ready than the last generation to deny their validity *in toto*; we make full allowance for the dependence of vision on memory. And this we can say: the book gives the impression of a solemn belief in the reality of the experiences it describes. The writer certainly believed himself to have had experiences which are not granted to all men. On the other hand, we see all through the mark of the artist working consciously and deliberately. The strange thing is that at the very moment of describing these experiences the writer seems to rest most strongly on the conventional language of his predecessors. The rôle of visionary is often suddenly dropped; we pass insensibly from the

language of trance to that of simple prediction. It is very hard to work out any consistent view. There is a curious note by Dr. Swete on 17^3 which just gives the two sides: "He carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness" (*i.e.* to see the vision of the Great Harlot). The note is, "The movement took place ἐν πνεύματι, *i.e.* in the sphere of the seer's spirit impelled by the spirit of God. . . . He probably has in view the frequent ecstasies of Ezekiel." Which was it? A literary reminiscence or a personal experience? Dr. Porter, in the article on "Revelation" in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, sums it up well when he says with regard to a similar conception, "A literal voice from heaven this certainly cannot be, and we seem shut up to two possibilities regarding it; either the angels and the voice from heaven belong wholly to the poetry of the piece, its literary form, or they express the writer's own interpretation of the strong impulse, as if from without, under which he wrote." His reverence for the materials he used, and his sense that the secrets he unfolded were not his own discovery, would lead naturally and quite innocently to the use of the impressive imagery of revelation, which he found current. It was the obvious means of emphasising his belief in the reality of his inspiration, his own possibly naïve interpreta-

tion of experiences which he could not explain or analyse. The question is interesting, but its importance is only secondary. The problem is psychological, and does not affect the value of the book. If we were to accept the language of trance in the most literal sense, that would not be the real ground for our belief in its inspiration. The records of a trance need to be criticised and examined even more narrowly than the reasoned productions of the waking mind. Whether trance or poetry, the ultimate proof of the teaching can only be its inherent truth. However we may picture to ourselves the process at work in the seer's mind, however our modern thought may analyse and interpret it, the book is a genuine record of experiences spiritually true. It is "the revelation of Jesus Christ"; the writer was "in the spirit"; he has given us "his own personal realisation of the unseen world," of the present life of Christ and the victory of His Church.

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